NOVEMBER 1953 PRICE 1s. 6d. NET.

The Expository Times

FOUNDED IN 1889 BY
JAMES HASTINGS, D.D.

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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

THE only valid reason for calling Hosea a 'Minor' prophet is that the book that goes under his name is shorter than those of the 'Major' prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. That he was the forerunner of Jeremiah is undoubted and his penetration to the meaning of true religion, that it consists in 'the knowledge of God' (Hos 6^6), was the beginning of an epoch.

When, for example, Hosea says that 'whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding' (4^{11})—Moffatt's 'liquor and lust deprive them of their wits'—he is up-to-date with the modern scientific approach to the drink-problem. Or when he says—Moffatt again—'I will not punish your daughters for harlotry, nor your matrons for adultery, when the men themselves go off with harlots, and sacrifice with temple-prostitutes' (4^{14}), he is saying in the name of God that there are not two standards of sexual morality, a higher one for women and a lower one for men. It is only in the last generation that the divorce laws of this country have recognized the principle laid down nearly three thousand years ago by this astonishing Hebrew prophet.

Hosea is difficult to understand. The general opinion is that his book is the most textually corrupt in the Old Testament, though this view has been seriously challenged by H. S. Nyberg, who believes that the difficulties are due mainly to our imperfect knowledge of North Israelitish idiom in Hosea's time. It is obvious that Hosea's apprehension of truth was intuitive rather than logical, so that he passes from one arresting metaphor to another in a way that is disconcerting to our minds. However that may be, the book abounds in unforgettable images and is a mine for the preacher who will take the trouble to ponder over it, as its last verse—probably a later pious addition—promises.

Now we have from the untiring pen of Professor Norman SNAITH, D.D., 'A Study of the Book of Hosea' under the title *Mercy and Sacrifice*.[1] It is not a commentary, though it may well be a kind of foreword to a commentary which we believe Dr. SNAITH is engaged to write. Its main emphasis is upon the famous verse, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings' (6^6), which according to Mt 9^{13} and 12^7 was twice quoted by our Lord.

Dr. SNAITH never takes anything for granted and he is always ready to have a tilt at positions which most people take for granted. For example, he makes out a case, not very convincedly nor yet very convincingly, for Hosea being earlier than Amos. This may have been the opinion of the Rabbis, but in all probability they were only trying to account for Hosea's place as the first in order of the Twelve, a position originally accorded to the book because it is longer than any of the others, with the exception of Zechariah which is demonstrably late. Nor is Dr. SNAITH convincing when he says that ch. 3 is 'late and that none of it can be ascribed to Hosea . . . the woman of ch. 3 is already a harlot, and so can scarcely be Gomer-bath-Diblaim.' So, for that matter, is the Gomer-bath-Diblaim of 1^2 unless, it may be quite rightly—though that does not affect the argument—we interpret the verse proleptically.

The main interest of the book is in the last two chapters (V.–VI.), on 'Sacrifice and the Prophets' and 'The Value of Sacrifice.' In the former of these Dr. SNAITH writes: 'Our conclusion in respect of Hosea is that he is against the sacrifices he knew, not necessarily on the ground that they were sacrifices of one type or another, but on the ground of the wickedness of those that brought them.' This is true of the pre-exilic prophets in general: 'It cannot be said with truth that any of them were enthusiastic on behalf of sacrifices. . . . In so far as sacrifices are the outward expression of true thankfulness of heart and true repentance, they are acceptable to God. Otherwise He hates

[1] S.C.M.; 7s. 6d. net.

them ; they are an abomination to Him.' This is probably a right estimate : there is less disposition than there was a generation ago to say that the prophets condemned sacrifice *per se*. As Dr. A. C. Welch pointed out, religion, especially corporate religion, ' needs more for its full culture than repentance and prayer.' Religion is not disembodied spirit, and the only disciplined observance conceivable to the Israelites before the Exile was sacrifice. The prophets condemned sacrifice because, *as they knew it*, it was undisciplined.

This brings us to the last chapter : ' If, then, these prophets who were the glory of Israel, were either flatly against sacrifices, or at least viewed them with apprehension and concern, what is the value of sacrifice ? Is there any need for it ? Is there any justification or any wisdom in associating the life and death of our Lord with the idea of sacrifice ? ' The last of these questions presents the preacher with an issue that is fundamental.

Dr. SNAITH rightly points out that in our modern parlance the word ' sacrifice ' is very loosely used. ' The English word " sacrifice " can be used of killing something (though not necessarily in a religious association), of giving something, of giving up something, or, religiously, of performing an act in the cultus, at a shrine or in the home, though not necessarily killing anything or even giving anything.' This is true enough : even in New Testament times St. Paul could bid the Romans (Ro 12^1) ' present your bodies a living sacrifice ' (the word is *thusian*).

It is surprising how few times the word ' sacrifice ' is used in the New Testament—hardly more than thirty times in all, and many of them are not relevant to a discussion of Dr. SNAITH's last question. Nearly half of them are in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and of that Epistle Dr. SNAITH commits himself to the statement that ' the references to the sacrificial system in the Epistle to the Hebrews are most confused and confusing, so much so that it is difficult to use the Old Testament sacrificial system in order to explain what the writer of the epistle means,' and his discussion of the matter is confined to a single page.

One cannot jump from the eighth century B.C. sacrifices to the Epistle to the Hebrews at a single bound. After the Exile sacrifice ceased to be the frivolous and immoral thing which the prophets had denounced. It was almost pathetically sin-conscious, even though it is definitely said that even the sin-offering only atoned for sins committed ' through error ' (Lv 4^2, R.V.m.), with the implication that sins committed wilfully could not be atoned for by sacrifice (Nu 15^{27-30}). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was perfectly aware of this (cf. He 10^4). He was thinking of this chastened sacrificial system, in which even the burnt-offering, notwithstanding Lv 4^2, was for the purpose of making expiation (E.V.V. ' atonement,' Lv 1^4). Obviously the system was not consistent and foolproof in all its details, and the Epistle to the Hebrews may likewise be ' confused and confusing.' All the same, there is something compelling in the majesty of the picture in chs. 9 and 10. For the author sacrifice was an imperfect and temporary instrument ; but he does interpret the Cross in the categories of sacrifice, in the proper meaning of the word, and he gives to the work of Christ a cosmic significance which is not excelled even in the Epistles of St. Paul. Modern congregations know little, and care even less, about the Jewish sacrificial system. But it should be possible for the preacher to-day to draw from the Epistle to the Hebrews a picture which his congregation will hardly be able to forget. I may make what private and personal ' sacrifices ' I will, but if Christ had not done for me something which I could never have done for myself, there would be little prospect of my salvation.

An old distinction between the hard, solid core of dogma characteristic of the Roman Church and the speculative freedom of Protestantism is becoming out of date. Modern Protestantism is exercising its own right to dogmatize ; and indeed asserting that any Christianity worth the name is based on a revelation of truth which gives the foundation and sets the limits for all speculation.

The generation has passed for which apologetics was a kind of open warfare where trenches might be abandoned and new positions taken up as the battle shifted. There is a return to the idea that the defence of the faith is the holding of a citadel. Or, to put it in another way, there was a generation which regarded religious faith as something which could be reasonably added to or fitted into a world view already arrived at independently on philosophic or scientific grounds. To-day it is insisted that religion comes in at the beginning with its own definitive world view into which science and philosophy must fit their contributions.

This new outlook is in evidence in the influence of Barthian ideas and in the revival of what is called ' Biblical theology.' Instead of standing on the defensive against scientific theory as a rival

claimant for human allegiance the new dogmatism may be quite ready to use scientific results as confirmatory supports of its own position. Modern apologetic has no patience with claims of science to be the final court of appeal. Canon Raven in his Gifford Lectures says he resents 'the process which has first abstracted from the natural world certain elements in it susceptible to quantitative study and mechanistic interpretation and then claims that these elements of it do in fact constitute the whole of the natural order.'

These are themes with which giants still wrestle in controversial volumes but there are signs that much of their thought is becoming respectable commonplace in modern discourse. For example, in addressing a ministerial session at the Methodist Conference at Bristol, the Rev. Edward ROGERS, B.D., in *The Doctrine of Man*,[1] says roundly that a false doctrine of man ignores his dignity and makes society unstable; and that the only true doctrine is Christian and Biblical; and he quotes Brunner's statement that all that the Bible lays down about man is indissolubly connected with what it says about God. At the same time Mr. ROGERS would claim the right to argue that the Christian doctrine that man is more than a part of 'Nature,' and is therefore in a situation of tension, meets the facts of experience and the demands of reason.

And writing in *The Congregational Quarterly* for July Professor T. W. MANSON says, 'The Bible continues to say those things it said from the beginning, that there is a God and that God does speak to men in a way they can understand. If it has any significance at all, it contains true knowledge of a real God. In the person and work of Jesus everything God could say to us in human terms has been said, and nothing more can be said. We can discover by thought and practice the meaning of that utterance in Christ. We cannot improve it or revise it.'

In similar fashion a dogmatic position is taken as the basis of its argument in a book called *Basic Economic Problems*, by Mr. John F. SLEEMAN.[2] Christianity being concerned with the whole of life 'starts,' he says, 'from the Christian beliefs concerning the nature of God and Man. These it brings to the study of economics not with the idea that Christianity may learn its true form from economics but that sound economics must pass the test, not vaguely of Christian ethics, but definitely of "Christian beliefs concerning the nature of God and Man." A Christian theology is part of the equipment needed for the proper study of economics.'

This book gives a very clear, careful, and impartial account of the moral problems and often perplexities which emerge for consideration in the effort to operate or improve any and every economic system whether of free enterprise or of planning. Mr. SLEEMAN encourages no hope that a bold start from a dogmatic Christian creed will yield some sort of blueprint for an ideal system. For the fact is that economics and politics deal with the organizations of a mixed society of Christians and non-Christians. It is the plain purpose of God that man should utilize the resources given him in Nature by working in co-operation with his fellows and this really involves the Divine sanction for all sorts of helpful arrangements of industry, marketing, investment, and so on, all of which quite evidently have in actual practice in an imperfect world dangerous as well as beneficial tendencies. The Christian, like other people, has to accept the challenge of the problems thus presented and bring his help to their solution. A chief part of his contribution will be his insistence on points involved in his dogma, such as the idea of stewardship not only in the interests of our own generation, and consideration for spiritual rights and needs and satisfactions. Because in practice economic problems involve values and priorities decided politically by persons swayed by motives often wrong or sinful, the Christian critique must be brought to bear on every attempted solution.

What Christianity must insist on is that because the difficulties and dangers of any system go down to the depths of the human heart and are felt there as affecting not merely the success of human effort but the realization of the Divine purpose, the Christian critique is always relevant and its advice and warning impossible to ignore without disaster. The redemption of economics will come when every system submits itself to the Christian criticism and finds in it a guiding light.

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[1] Epworth Press; 6d. net.
[2] S.C.M.; 10s. 6d. net.

Reason and Revelation

By the Reverend Charles Smith, M.A., The Vicarage, Heatherycleugh-in-Weardale

The point I want to establish in this article is not mainly that the New Testament Revelation is in itself a reasonable one, but rather that it is a part of the general Revelation through Reason. I want to show that though it be unique in its perfection and its completeness, yet, in essence it is only the final link in the chain of God's self-revealing to man; and that it is a link of the same kind as the rest of the chain.

It has always been customary to distinguish two types of revelation, which we can broadly describe as General and Particular. The general revelation is that which needs no special mediator between man and God. The marks of the Creator visible in the created world, the moral laws written in the human heart and discernible by the human reason: these things demand no interpreter, for they are visible to any clear eye, whether of Christian or pagan, and they are understandable by any intelligent mind up to the level of its own grasp. You can easily appreciate the truth of this by a glance at the ground common to every religion worthy of the name, from the most primitive to the most developed. The basis of truth in each of them is similar—that there is a God, that He is the Creator and Governor of the universe, that He makes certain moral demands upon His human creatures, that there is some distinction of right from wrong whatever that distinction may be. Now it is usually assumed that this type of Divine revelation calls for no intermediary save the enlightened human intelligence. But if you think about it a little more closely, you will see that in fact there is one invariable intermediary. It is, in some shape or form, the material world. The most savage savage, terrified by the bulk of a mountain into setting a god upon the summit of it, is reasoning from a solid mass of material which becomes to him the vehicle of revelation; the jungle dweller, terrified by the dark recesses of the jungle into seeking the protection of a god even mightier than it, is reasoning away from the terrors of appearance into the safety of Reality. At the other extreme, the philosopher, observing the rational laws which he sees to govern the universe and the operations of the human mind, is likewise merely making an inference from facts which are a part of this material world, to the spiritual universe which lies underneath them. In other words, the most general revelation is a mixture of two things, this created world, and the play of the religious reason upon it. I believe that this principle is so important that I should like to amplify it a little more. The one basic truth of all the self-revelations of God is this: the first invariable condition of revelation is that God makes use of a material instrument. In the revelation which we call general or natural, that material instrument is the created world, or some aspect of it such as the moral law or the laws of Nature. These things are, as it were, the raw materials for the discernment of deity. The flux which melts down that raw material into the finished knowledge, is the religious reason. So that all our knowledge of God is a synthesis of two things: the first is God's self-revelation through the material world, the second is the melting down of that hard fact by our intelligence and intuition.

I think it is of the utmost importance to have this clear at the beginning, for the rest of this article depends on it. The most general and elementary self-revelation of God is bound to be in accordance with reason, for reason is one of the two elements of which it is composed. It is therefore in complete harmony with whatever stage the human reason happens to have arrived at. The revelation is reasonable to the savage, and is right for him at his level, because it is a part product of his own mind; it is right for Isaac Newton at his own level, for the reason he brings to bear upon it is higher; it is right for von Hügel, the greatest of modern theologians, at his level, because all the knowledge of God conveyed to us through the created world is a synthesis of the material used by God, and the play of the inspired human reason upon it.

We often fail to appreciate the truly enormous part played in our religious life by this natural/rational mode of revelation—all that is beautiful in life, from the hanging head of a snowdrop to the elaborate skill of a painting by Raphael; from the dawn chorus of thrushes to the vast technical skill of a symphony by Beethoven; from the first simple awareness of a truth in arithmetic to the most complex discovery of modern science. The life of the human spirit is immeasurably enriched by all these things; and they are all manifestations of Divine beauty, Divine goodness, Divine truth, taking shape through the visible things of this material world. In looking at them we are seeing the invisible things of creation through the things that are visible. And yet, immeasurably

enriching though they be, the knowledge they have to offer is strictly limited, for it is sternly controlled by its sub-human vehicles. In sum, I should think that natural revelation might teach us to know God as powerful, as beautiful, as law-giving, as moral, as knowledgeable, as impartial, as untouched by the changes and chances of this transitory world. These are all reasonable and reasonably true facts about God, but how inadequate they are to describe the real holiness, the real goodness, the real lovingness, the real pitifulness, of God. The natural world and the revelation through it cannot exhibit these things, because they can be exhibited only through human personality. And the revelation through human personality belongs to the type we have been accustomed to call Particular.

For many hundreds of years it was always assumed that God was in the habit of taking some individual man and using him as the unconscious mouthpiece of God's words and ideas. It was as though the man were a pipe through which the ideas of God were conducted down to earth, without the pipe in any way affecting even the verbal form of the message. Thus the Hebrew prophet conveyed to humanity truths which God wished to have conveyed, without the man's own personality even colouring the transmission of the message. I think that this notion is fundamentally wrong: wrong not because it can be demonstrated to be false, though it easily can, but because it is in complete opposition to the method of God in His self-revelations. The truths that can be revealed only through human personality are revealed by God by means of human personalities, just as the created world is used by Him to reveal such truths as its nature permits. God always makes use of some vehicle which in itself can carry His revelation of Himself; the human personality is such a vehicle. A block of stone is shaped by a sculptor to carry a message to those who look at it, because it becomes a thing to stir their imaginations to make a particular sort of response to it. So a human personality can be shaped by God so that when men are brought into contact with it their imaginations are stirred to the perception of whatever truth it is that God wishes them to learn about Himself.

I think we shall get the truth of the matter clearer if we think of God's self-revelation through individuals in terms of Inspiration: and Inspiration I should define as a heightening of the human consciousness to the point at which it becomes a link with the Divine. Before I go on to illustrate this in more detail, let me state the principle on which it depends. It is this: Man and God are not two utterly separated types of being; in so far as a man is a creature of spirit existing within a garment of flesh, he is at least a creature of a class similar to his Creator, for the God who created and the man whom He created after His image and likeness must share some common ground. Therefore when the sensibility of a man is heightened to the topmost pinnacle of human capacity, what that man perceives is something—if not everything—of Divine truth. Inspiration, in other words, is a means of approaching through the senses of man to something of the truth of God. And more than all others, it has been the method used by God for conveying to men truths about God. The history of every religion can be written as the history of inspired men. The traditional lore of a primitive faith is the total of inspired men's utterances accumulated in the history of the tribe. The lofty state of Greek religion in the centuries before Christ was the work of one or two men of supreme religious inspiration in a limited field—Socrates and Plato and Aristotle. The religion they reveal may appear to their contemporaries to be unreasonable, because lesser men cannot think so fast as the pioneers. It is later found to be reasonable; it is bound to be so, because it is a direct product of the human reason working at its highest, because most inspired, level. At first the inspired prophet is ridiculed as unreasonable because he is more reasonable than his fellows. In the course of generations they catch up, and he is venerated as one of the heroes of the past, while his formerly foolish words are incorporated into the canon of the sacred lore.

The Old Testament is far and away the most splendid illustration of this truth. From first to last it is the record of a nation which produced inspired men over a period unequalled in length by any other race—that is the religious importance of it. For our purpose at the moment what matters is not its verbal inerrancy, but the manner of its working. That manner is the constant application of inspired human reason to the affairs of history and the relations between man and man and man and God. The importance of the Old Testament is that it is the supreme record of God's use in self-revelation of the sensibilities of men; and that, so far as we can see, during that period of a thousand years, God appears to have exhausted that particular means of self-expression. I shall illustrate this in detail only briefly. In the eighth century before Christ Hebrew society was split into the two extremes of exaggerated wealth and bitter poverty. In the cities the wealth took the form so inevitable in a primitive Oriental society, of lavish display and fantastic luxury; the power it brought resulted in a terrible grinding down of the powerless poor. These things had been the rule in every ancient civilization since the world began. But in Palestine a herdsman, Amos, looked at them and

drew from them one or two quite reasonable conclusions. He saw that God was equally the God of both halves of society, the powerful rich and the downtrodden poor ; therefore it followed that He must disapprove of the unjust balance between them. Therefore—and here is the further step which demands an inspired intelligence—that God must be a God of Justice. Therefore, again, a nation which is so completely corrupt must fall a prey to other less corrupt nations, for the Divine justice must exact retribution from it. There you see the inspired human reason taking the facts of history into account and drawing from them the new truth that God was a just God. Before that time gods were arbitrary and capricious beings ; after it all Divine acts must be built upon a foundation of justness, for God had used the inspired reason of Amos to reveal this truth about Himself, that He is first and foremost a just God. Or think of Hosea, cursed with a faithless wife. Many men before had loved unworthy women, and had continued to love them despite their unworthiness. But Hosea looked at his experience with inspired eyes, and made one of those leaps of intuition by which knowledge grows. He saw that no continued faithlessness on her part could destroy his love for her, and that so many times as she wished to return to him he was willing to receive her back. And he saw that God was in the same relation to His faithless Israel. Therefore—and here is the leap of intuition that shows the inspiration—God was loving as Hosea was. Henceforward whatever be thought about God must be fitted into the background of His justice and His loving-kindness ; for these had been found to be basic to His character by two leaps of the inspired human reason. Or, one final illustration of this point : think of that writer who described the Suffering Servant of Is 52–53. The facts upon which he worked were the regular oppressions and exiles which afflicted the Jewish people. Why should it be that the nation specially chosen by God as His instrument of revelation must be made to suffer so much more than any other people ? It was not a punishment for the nation's own outrageous sinfulness ; it must therefore be that the nation was chosen, or that an ideal fragment within the nation was chosen, to suffer for the sins of other people ; therefore one person could be healed by the sufferings of another. That was perhaps the greatest leap of intuition ever made by the human inspired reason. So great indeed that it was five hundred years later before the reasonable truth of it was properly established ; and it was only established by the actual demonstration of Christ in His own Person of the reasonableness of it.

One could multiply examples, but I want to say only sufficient to demonstrate the truth that in revelation through human beings, God actually uses their intellect, their imagination, their sensibility ; and that they become the vehicles of revelation only because they are heightened by inspiration to more than the normal human capacity. The human mind, heightened to its maximum capacity, can become so near to the Divine that it can be made the vehicle of self-revelation by God. The message it brings is thus a synthesis. The truth it reveals is God's truth ; the mind through which it is revealed is man's. And it is just because God constantly makes use of this synthesis in revelation that the revelation is in due course found to be inherently reasonable. God is not in the habit of speaking to man direct ; He uses an instrument—in the case of the general, natural revelation, that instrument is the material of the created world : in the case of the particular revelation it is the mind and sensibility of an individual personality. The instrument is different, but the principle is the same. And the truths revealed are different too. The impersonal truths about God can be seen from the impersonal creation, the universe of laws and harmonies and beauties, and majesties and powers ; the personal truths about Him can be seen only through His personal creatures, the creatures whose heightened sensibilities can demonstrate justice, truthfulness, loving-kindness, some degree of holiness, some degree of selflessness. But though the inspired human being can reveal through his own personality much about God, he cannot reveal everything, for otherwise he would himself be God. No matter how greatly the most sensitive human imagination be inspired to transcend its own limitations, no matter how close be the affinity between the inspired creature and its Creator, nevertheless the one remains creature and the other remains Creator, the one remains man and the other remains God, and the earthly, finite creature cannot in the nature of things be the complete revelation of the heavenly, infinite God. That is why the Old Testament, far though it goes, is not the last word about God : it is a synthesis between the truth God reveals and the men through whom it is revealed, and, in the last resort it is limited by the human half of that synthesis.

On the face of it it seems that God is attempting to overcome an impossible paradox. On the one hand, He is continually striving to reveal Himself to men ; on the other hand, He has chosen to achieve that self-revelation through earthly instruments. And here is the paradox : the earthly instruments inevitably limit the truth which they reveal, for there is no earthly instrument great enough to carry a complete revelation of the Divine. By the time the Old Testament was completed, all that could humanly be discovered about

God had been discovered, the book of Nature had been read and the inspired reason had been drained. All that remained seemed to be stagnation, and that would automatically have meant corruption. There was only one method of overcoming the paradox, while yet continuing the method of revealing Himself through an earthly instrument. That method was to intensify to a more than human height the affinity between man and God. The ordinary human being inspired becomes something a little more than a normal human being, a slight approximation to the Divine ; let that relationship be heightened to the greatest conceivable extent, let a Divine human being live in earthly conditions, and then we have the one perfect instrument for the self-revelation—the complete self-revelation—of God to men. The paradox would be overcome by the only possible means. The New Testament is the record of precisely such a Divine-human instrument of revelation.

It is fundamental to the plan of this article to realize at this point that Jesus Christ is at once unique and yet the fulfilment of a relation between God and man that had been imperfectly foreshadowed in a score of inspired instruments before His time. He is unique, in that He is perfectly God and perfectly human ; He is a fulfilment in that He completes and perfects that slight affinity between God and man upon which all revelation depends. And it is just because He completes and sums up the scattered hints of previous inspired men that His new revelation *at first* struck His hearers as inherently true and reasonable.

Perhaps the first problem in the Old Testament to baffle the reason—as it baffles it in all primitive religions—is the discovery of apparently irreconcilable features in the character of the same God—a problem which is most easily solved by the polytheist. How can God be at the same time just and loving, jealous and pitiful, wrathful and merciful, remotely holy and infinitely concerned, almighty and all-knowing yet stooping to care for the sparrows or the hairs on the human head ? It is not reasonable, for it seems that God has been made into a portmanteau term to contain every attribute that can possibly be packed into it. It is quite beyond the human mind to rationalize so many different characteristics. It is necessary that we should see them, under human conditions, harmonized in a personality, and then we might hope to comprehend a little. In the personality of Jesus Christ we do in fact see just such a harmony of unequal characteristics. We can see how the basic truth about God's character is that He is a God of love, and that all His other attributes must somehow be superimposed against that all-important background. Thus a Divine wrath which seemed in the abstract inconsistent with a Divine love, falls naturally into place as the aspect of a love which burns only to purify, the love which destroys the sin only because of its intense passion for the sinner. The holiness of God, which to later Old Testament writers had ended by removing Him far away into the recesses of heaven, where He could not be contaminated by the impurities of earth, is seen in the Person of Christ in quite a different light : its distinctive quality is not aloofness, for on the contrary it is always ready to mix with the most disreputable sinner ; its mark is that it purifies what it touches, for it is a positive quality. We might put the matter thus : God's love brings His holiness down to the most soiled human characters, and the holiness so touches them with its own purity that they become worthy of the love. So does the personality of Christ reconcile justice with love. Strict justice is not an attractive virtue ; yet it is a necessary one, and both a society and a universe need to be based upon it. As Amos was the first to see, the character of God must have a foundation of cold, impartial justice. But it takes the living illustration of Christ to demonstrate that God's love so overshadows His own justice that He chooses to undergo in His own Person the retributions demanded for the transgressions of humanity. Again, it is not consistent for one person to be Almighty and All-knowing, and yet at the same time easily moved by pity for the apparently insignificant things of this world, grieved for the sparrow which falls to the ground, interested in the fate of a single human hair. These things would be beneath the notice of an Almighty Dictator on earth—unless he were exceptionally finicking over trivialities. Looking at Christ we see that the inconsistency is smoothed away, for the humble love, which is the basis of the character He shows, thinks it no indignity to throw away its mighty attributes in order to bring itself down to the level of the least of its beloved creatures.

Had a writer of fiction conceived a character so made up of contradictory attributes as the God of Christianity the critics would have condemned the character as contrary to reason. We, who can see the attributes harmonized in the character of Jesus Christ, can see also that in Him they are perfectly reasonable, in that they become no longer self-contradicting, but supplementary one to the other. Up to about this point the hearers of Christ in the flesh were struck by the reasonable charm of His character ; crowds hung upon His words, and agreed that they were authoritative—and that means, on the face of it, reasonable to them ; for up to this point the revelation in Christ was largely a summing-up in a visible Person of Divine char-

acteristics which had to some extent been thought of in the abstract previously. It was a demonstration that in the flesh of a perfect being it was quite reasonable for many surprising characteristics to exist together at the same time.

But beyond this Christ had much to demonstrate, and it was then that the crowds fell away from Him, for it began to appear that what He had to show was no longer reasonable in their eyes. It would have been reasonable, for instance, for one who professed to be a God Incarnate, to rule the world. It was not reasonable, even to His intimate followers and friends, that a God Incarnate should suffer and die as a part of His self-revelation. Is it reasonable to us ? Look at the facts in outline. Jesus Christ the man was absolutely without spot or blemish of sin ; absolutely pure, absolutely true, absolutely good, absolutely holy, absolutely loving, absolutely everything that is perfect. He came into this world, which, even, at its best, is absolutely none of these things ; and at its worst is very far removed from them indeed. He came into the life of a world whose every aspect is to some degree marred by sin ; and, to some extent, He came especially in order to confront that sinfulness with His own sinlessness. What result would you expect from such a meeting of opposites? Tennyson wrote that ' we needs must love the highest when we see it.' But that is simply not true ; we are much more likely—most of us—and that is what matters—we are much more likely to hate it or pretend to despise it ; the mere fact that by contrast it makes us feel our own unworthiness, our own soiledness, is good reason for us to hate it bitterly, and to attempt to destroy the uneasy presence from out of our midst. We may regret it later, but we shall destroy it first, and allow remorse to follow. That is the usual way of man en masse. We might try to put the logical sequence into a fragment of dialogue, something like this :

> Love came down and met Sin.
> ' What shall I do ? ' said Love.
> ' You must suffer and die,' said Sin,
> ' That I may live.'
> ' But then what shall I do ? ' said Love.
> ' You shall rise and live,' said Sin,
> ' That I may begin to die.'

On such terms, the suffering and death of God Incarnate was the most logical thing that could possibly have happened. The authorities, to whom the New Testament assigns the responsibility, were the obvious instruments of human sinfulness ; they were nothing more than instruments, for the real cause was the irresistible dictatorship of human sinfulness, which was compelled, at whatever ultimate cost, to drive from its midst this uneasy Perfection. And to make the matter more reasonable still, we must remember that the Incarnation is not only an event which happened once, for all time. It is also the symbol of a permanent relationship between God and the created world. In looking at the experience of God Incarnate in His relations with this world, we are seeing something that is going on all the time. God is always confronted by the enormous human rebellion which we call sin ; and is it not evident that His constant reaction to that rebellion must be the reaction of suffering love ? Christ, in the flesh, revealed what is the normal experience of God, and it seems to me that once we have appreciated the truth that God is above all loving, then the fact of His suffering eternally follows of necessity. It is more than just reasonable ; it is demanded by logical consistency.

However, both Christ Himself, and certainly later New Testament writers, go much further than this. They make the fact of His death into something of value for the sinfulness of other people. Here we must be careful not to discuss later developments of the theology of the Atonement, for the New Testament contains only the fact, not the theology. How reasonable is it to suppose that the death of Christ could in any way be efficacious for the forgiving of sins which He did not commit ? You may remember my saying that the writer of Is 52–53 perceived a truth which had to wait five hundred years for its full illustration ; in the death of Christ it is perfectly clarified. The truth that in the suffering of one the sin of another can be blotted out. How true that is in human experience I should not like to say, for I cannot really feel the truth of it myself. But when the suffering is that of God, the idea takes on a fresh significance. Think of it like this. The love of God is built upon a foundation of impartial justice, and impartial justice demands that for every wrong there must be some retribution. That, I should say, was a law of reason. Now add the fact that every creature in some sense exists only in God—at least in the sense that each moment we are recreated anew or held in being by God. It is unfortunately the case that so long as we are human and sinful, we are prevented by our very sinfulness from ever being genuinely and completely sorry for our sins, for our wills themselves are corrupt. So we are left with the dilemma that we cannot make the retribution for our sins that we would, if only we were able. The desire is there, but not the power, for a perfect act of repentance could be made only by a person become perfect. That would not be human at all. But, as God is love as well as justice, He cannot reasonably permit humanity to remain in so intolerable a dilemma ; and, as we are a part of His own being,

He Himself experiences in His own Person the retribution demanded by justice, and in Him we are freed from the penalty of our own wrongdoing. I think that is reasonable, provided that it be admitted that we are in a real sense, an eternal part of the being of God—that, in the words of Emily Brontë, ' every existence exists in Him.'

So much, then, for the human Personality of Christ as a reasonable revelation in history of the eternal God. One aspect of His work remains to be discussed. His life on earth was not meant to be only a symbol of the life of God, it was meant to be an effective symbol which influenced those who were brought into contact with it. In other words, having looked at God Incarnate, men were expected to be transformed by the sight so that they lived a new sort of life. I do not think that any purpose would be served by a detailed examination of the Christian ethic. I would sooner admit from the start that, taken clause by clause, it is not a reasonable ethic for an imperfect world. But then it was not intended to be, for it was not planned as a legal code to be followed word by word like a new Pharisaic system. The Sermon on the Mount is the statement of an ethical ideal ; it is the ideal of life as it ought to be lived in a redeemed community. Now it is fundamental to any ideal that it is not realizable in an imperfect world ; so soon as it becomes realizable and therefore reasonable, it ceases to be an ideal ; and once it were realized it would cease to be effective and a further ideal beyond itself would be projected by the searching mind. The ideal is the perfect goal in a perfect world after which men strive in order to improve a little this imperfect world. So it is with the Christian ethic. It is the ideal standard of conduct for a world in which the redeemed community alone lives. In that context it is a reasonable and glorious ethic. In this unredeemed world, lived by a minority, it would be both unreasonable and ineffective, for it could not do other than result in the oppression and disappearance of the redeemed community which put it into operation. It was the realization of this truth which made the great Albert Schweitzer put forward the theory that the New Testament ethic was meant to fill only the brief interval before the expected Second Coming. I do not feel that any such theory is necessary provided we appreciate the truth that ideals are reasonable only within their own proper context. The proper context of the Sermon on the Mount is a redeemed society ; in that context the Sermon is perfectly reasonable. In any other, such as our own, it is an ideal, which is at once the goal of our striving, and the standard of judgment by which we assess the worth of our Christian life. As we approach that standard we are becoming worthy Christians ; as we recede from it we are being false to the Christianity we profess. We may never attain to it fully in this life : but then, we never attain to anything fully in this life. If we did, we should cease to be human and therefore imperfect.

I have tried to illustrate the important truth that God has always revealed Himself through two vehicles, the material creation and the play of the human reason upon it ; so that any given section of His self-revelation is an alloy between the God who reveals and the material—whether of the natural world or the human vehicle—through which the revelation is made. The most perfect type of that manner of self-revelation is the revelation of the New Testament ; there we see the human character exhibited in its highest perfection in Jesus Christ ; that is the material instrument. In making such use of the perfected human reason, God has demonstrated that the most comprehensive revelation of Himself is naturally the most comprehensively reasonable. It follows that as our defective reason develops, so in proportion must the New Testament reveal itself to us as an ever more reasonable revelation.

Literature

HOW NOT TO TRANSLATE THE BIBLE

A TRANSLATION of the Old Testament—though the name Old Testament is repudiated by the translators — sponsored by Jehovah's Witnesses has begun to appear under the title *New World Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures,* of which Genesis to Ruth has so far been issued (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York). The translation is elaborately supplied with a complex system of references and notes, including a system of chain references which will be explained to the reader in a subsequent volume. The translators have their own views on Hebrew tenses, but prefer to offer them to uninstructed readers before submitting their justification of them to the scrutiny of scholars. This is probably wise. They profess to offer a rendering into modern English which is as faithful as possible. In fact, the jargon which they use is often scarcely English at all, and it reminds one of nothing so much as a schoolboy's first painful beginnings in translating Latin into

English. The translation is marked by a wooden literalism which will only exasperate any intelligent reader—if such it finds—and instead of showing the reverence for the Bible which the translators profess, it is an insult to the Word of God. These may seem hard words, but a few samples from the Book of Genesis will suffice for their justification.

In Gn $15^{5f.}$ we are offered the following: 'He now brought him outside and said: "Look up, please, to the heavens and count the stars, if you are possibly able to count them." And he went on to say to him: "So your seed will become." And he put faith in Jehovah, and he proceeded to count it to him as righteousness.' Here there is no gain in meaning to compensate for the literary inelegance. The same is true of 4^{13}: 'My punishment for guilt is too great to carry.' Or what modern author who knew how the English language should be used would so mishandle it as in 6^{3}: 'My spirit shall not act toward man indefinitely in that he is also flesh'? Or why should such wretched translation English be put into the mouth of God as in 18^{20}: 'The cry of complaint about Sodom and Gomorrah, yes, it is loud, and their sin, yes, it is very heavy. I am quite determined to go down that I may see whether they act altogether according to the outcry over it that has come to me, and, if not, I can get to know it.' Even readers who know only English will wonder whether writers who are so poorly equipped to write their own language can really be authorities on Hebrew tenses!

A harsh construction which occurs repeatedly is found in 4^{8}: 'Cain went to assaulting Abel his brother,' in 19^{22}: 'I am not able to do a thing until your arriving there,' in 24^{32}: 'he went to unharnessing the camels,' and in 24^{66}: 'the servant went to relating to Isaac all the things he had done,' to cite but a few examples.

In one respect the translation can claim to be modern. It knows none of the delicacy of the Hebrew in sexual matters, but prefers baldness to euphemism. It is therefore the more surprising that in 24^{2} it renders inaccurately and misleadingly: 'Put your hand, please, under my *hip*,' instead of 'under my *thigh*.'

In $5^{21.24}$ special significance is found in the fact that the article stands in האלהים, which is therefore here rendered 'the God,' and held to be emphatic, meaning 'the true God.' The same construction is found in 6^{2}, however, where it is not so rendered, and in many other passages where it could hardly have this special nuance. Nor does the English 'Enoch kept on walking with the God' imply for the English reader any greater suggestion that this is the true God than the absence of the article would imply.

In 10^{9} there is no reason whatever to render 'Just like Nimrod a mighty hunter *in opposition to* Jehovah,' when the Hebrew simply says *before*. This is not translation, but tampering with the text. In 19^{31} we are offered: 'the first-born proceeded to say to the *smaller* woman,' and in other passages we find the same perversion of modern English. For in modern English this would imply that the second woman was of smaller stature or girth than the other, and not simply that she was *younger*, though this is the obvious meaning of the Hebrew.

From beginning to end this volume is a shining example of how the Bible should not be translated, and a reminder that the Bible is great literature, which deserves to be translated by those who have a feeling for style and who both understand the original and know how to express its meaning with elegance.

H. H. Rowley

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE [1]

For this new impression of his book, *The Doctrines of the Christian Faith* (Independent Press; 12s. 6d. net), Principal Sydney Cave, D.D., has not thought it necessary to rewrite his book even after a twenty-year interval. In thus refraining he is probably justified, for he has not allowed himself to stray into byways of controversy, and the setting of the fundamental topics with which he deals has not greatly altered in a couple of decades. There may be a difference of emphasis, he allows, but even against this—perhaps chiefly noticeable in connexion with Neo-Calvinism—Principal Cave safeguards himself by suggesting that Barth may have grown in wisdom and in grace since he first became prominent, and that the closeness of Brunner's connexion with the Barthian School may have been modified.

The introductory chapter on the necessity of theological study is a piquant disclosure of the recurring tragedy of the theological professor who finds his students, at the close of the final session, shaking lightheartedly from their feet the dust of his classroom, and proposing to go forth to their work armed with eloquence alone. (He should read the late Professor John Laird's very similar remarks on the neglect of philosophy by the divinity student.) The illustration of the specialist and the general practitioner is cleverly adapted to enforce the argument that the preacher cannot do without theology, and that the question is not between theology and none at all, but between a good and a bad theology.

The keynote of Principal Cave's teaching might be said to be his insistence on the need to explain

[1] This review was written before the announcement of the lamented death of Dr. Cave.

Christian doctrine from within—from a study of the One 'in whom God's grace and power were manifested'—and not by means of external categories. No doubt he would allow that the history of Christian doctrine and the safeguarding efficacy of the creeds show that each aspect of a controversy contains truth, but the confusion of thought and the antagonism of parties arose largely from the fact that the theologians attempted to explain Christ by means of categories which were imperfectly Christianized. The controversy as to whether Christ was a God-Man or the incarnate Son of God arose from the attempt to reconcile a unitary conception of God with a vivid apprehension of the actuality of Christ's humanity. An illustration of the tendency of thought in this book is the mediating conclusion on Original Sin —'The Christian estimate of man speaks neither of his natural nobility nor of his total depravity.' In general, the author hints, instead of seeking to understand what God has done we often begin by saying what we think God required to do. The exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity is convincing just because it owes so much to the application of the underlying principle, and the setting forth of the final belief in a Trinity of manifestation is particularly beautiful. We wish that the author's treatment of the belief in Immortality had been greatly expanded. This would have added to the usefulness of a book which many students would be glad to possess as a text-book, and which would save them from both dangerous complacencies and unnecessary perturbations of spirit as they strive to reconcile the varying interpretations of the doctrines they are called upon to preach.

W. S. URQUHART

ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WRITERS

Two further volumes have appeared in the 'Ancient Christian Writers' series, published in America by the Newman Press and in this country by Longmans, Green and Co. The price of each volume is 25s. net. There is *The Works of St. Patrick and St. Secundinus' Hymn on St. Patrick*, translated and annotated by Dr. Ludwig Bieler. The volume includes an adequate introduction and biography of St. Patrick. It contains St. Patrick's Confession; his Letter to the soldiers of Coroticus, who was a British Prince who had raided Ireland, massacred St. Patrick's neophytes at the altar, and abducted the congregation into slavery; certain detached fragments; the sayings of St. Patrick, and the Canons. Patrick, like all great saints, was a humble man. He begins his Confession: 'I am Patrick, a sinner, most unlearned, the least of all the faithful and utterly despised by many.' He came to Ireland first as an exile. 'Every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed.' He escaped to his old home, but in a vision he heard his old associates saying to him, 'We ask thee, boy, come and walk among us once more.' He came to Ireland in A.D. 432 and when he died in A.D. 461 he left Ireland very largely a Christian country. He writes in the Confession with charm and with simplicity and in the Letter to the soldiers of Coroticus with force and with righteous indignation. Along with St. Patrick's Letter and Confession the volume contains St. Secundinus' Hymn on St. Patrick, Teacher of the Irish, which is composed in four-line stanzas beginning with consecutive letters of the alphabet. Finally, the volume contains the 'Lorica,' St. Patrick's Hymn. The notes are brief, scholarly, and competent. This is the most charming volume which has appeared to date in this series.

The other volume is the *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, by St. Irenaeus, translated and annotated by Professor Joseph P. Smith, S.J. The only complete extant version of this work is in Armenian, from which this translation is made. The work was originally written to a certain Marcianus, as Irenaeus says, 'to commune with you a little in writing, and to set forth in brief the preaching of the truth, to confirm your faith.' It falls into four sections—God and His Creation, the Fall; the History of Redemption; Christ in the Old Law; Christ in the New Law. The main interest is in the third section. There is no better example of how the Early Church treated prophecy, for in the Old Testament Irenaeus finds a foretelling of every conceivable event in the life of Jesus.

Two examples may show how Irenaeus can handle prophecy. 'The words *whose government is set upon His shoulders* mean allegorically the Cross, on which He held His back when He was crucified; for what was and is an ignominy for Him, and, because of Him, for us, the Cross, that, he says, is His government, that is a sign of Empire.' The passage about the lion lying down with the lamb foretells the day when ravening and raging sinners will be one with the innocent followers of Christ. There is a certain fascination in seeing what patristic ingenuity can extract from the Old Testament.

The notes are specially valuable; there is an excellent note on the phrase 'the finger of God' and its history and meaning. It is safe to say that these two volumes amply maintain the high standard of this series, and we await further volumes with interest and anticipation.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

THE DARKER SIDE OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM

More convincing than the attack of the ultra-Protestant is the matter-of-fact statement of one who claims to be a Catholic, as to why he is not a Roman Catholic. The Vicar of All Saints', Margaret Street, the Rev. Kenneth N. Ross, deals first in *Why I Am Not a Roman Catholic* (Mowbray; 7s. 6d. net) with the new dogma promulgated in 1950, regarding the Assumption of the Virgin 'body and soul into heavenly glory.' Unknown alike to the writers of the New Testament and to the Early Fathers, the doctrine is first mentioned about A.D. 600. 'It is clear,' writes Mr. Ross, 'that Rome has changed and changed for the worse. No longer seeking to control the excesses of popular devotion, she is swayed by it' (p. 31). An earlier concession to Mariolatry was the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854, which began 'as an opinion only put forward in the twelfth century, and rejected by the most competent theologians of the time' (p. 39). The Infallibility of the Pope they may attempt to base on Mt 16^{18}, but seventeen of the Fathers interpret 'the Rock' as meaning Peter (not his successors), eight as all the Apostles (not Peter only), forty-four as the faith which Peter expressed, and sixteen as our Lord Himself. Unhistorical, since Popes have manifestly 'fallen into heresy and made grave theological blunders,' the dogma is itself by no means infallible, the Catholic Dictionary acknowledging concerning the Great Schism that 'even now it is perhaps not absolutely certain who was Pope and who Anti-pope' (p. 65). After a chapter on 'The Validity of Anglican Orders' comes 'Some Other Matters,' a dozen pages which may well prove the most effective in giving pause to any one feeling the appeal of Rome. Romanists like Von Hügel, Lord Acton, and Newman are quoted, bewailing the limitation of private judgment, which in some cases means denial of truth. A Roman Catholic is condemned to obscurantism. He must believe that 'Adam and Eve were real people, the tempter a real snake. . . . that St. Matthew wrote before St. Mark (since Augustine said so), that St. Paul wrote Hebrews. . . . The obedient Roman Catholic believes neither in freedom of speech nor in freedom of the press. . . . Does the Pope still claim the power to depose monarchs?' (p. 106f.)

This brings us to a second book, one, as the name of the publishers shows, more belligerently Protestant—*No Friend of Freedom,* by the Rev. A. H. Jeffree James (Protestant Association of South Africa; 2s. net). It is less historical, makes some assertions about Protestantism and democracy which are too sweeping, and seems content to identify the medieval Church with the Roman Catholic. Totalitarian religion is shown to be parallel to the Totalitarian State. As Marxists claim, to the outside world, to be democratic, so in Protestant countries the Roman Church pretends to a love of freedom which it does not practise. Evidence of hideous persecution in Franco's Spain, in Mexico, and in South America, in recent years, completes a picture which will revolt the conscience of every Christian who accepts that evidence. And the trouble is, I do not know how any one whose eyes are open can do other than accept it.

Some of us have welcomed, and still welcome, every occasion when we can stand together with our Roman Catholic brethren. But love of Christian unity must not blind us to attitudes and practices belonging to the Dark Ages which survive among them.

JOHN FOSTER

JUDAISM AND APOCALYPTIC

In recent years Jews have been taking an interest in the apocalyptic writings of the period before and after the beginning of the Christian era, in contrast to their long neglect of them. Three volumes of the Dropsie College edition of the Jewish Apocryphal Literature have appeared, and now Dr. Joshua Bloch has published in the Monograph Series of the 'Jewish Quarterly Review' a valuable work *On the Apocalyptic in Judaism* (Dropsie College, Philadelphia; $2.50). In this he traces the development from prophecy to apocalyptic and examines the influence of the apocalyptic writings on Judaism. He challenges the view of Schechter that these writings are 'of little help to the student of rabbinic opinion' (p. 1) and of G. F. Moore that 'it is a fallacy of method for the historian to make them a primary source for the eschatology of Judaism, much more to contaminate its theology with them' (p. 59), and prefers the view of Charles that 'Talmudic Judaism no less than Christianity owes its spiritual conceptions of the future to apocalyptic' (p. 35). He recognizes, of course, that apocalyptic flourished particularly amongst the sects, and perhaps especially in Galilee, but he shows that it left its mark on Judaism, and its influence can be found in the Talmud and Midrash, in the Kabbalah and the Zohar, and in Rabbinic literature. Throughout there is a fine appreciation of the value of these writings, which finds its strongest expression in the concluding paragraph of the book: 'The apocalyptic writings are a strange and magnificent literature. They serve as a testament to once widely prevalent ideas about God and man, the universe and the various forces operating in it;

they also testify to the sovereignty of imagination and to the recognition of a like prevalent claim that this sovereign faculty is helpless unless it works with and through the substance of reality. What gives apocalyptic literature its particular quality is that in it imagination is exercised upon material so exotic that it seems to partake of fantasy and legend. In existence now longer than two millennia and available in many languages, its scope is enormous and takes the reader to the remote outposts of the divine empire and transports him to the farthest reaches of the spirit' (p. 153). Altogether this is a noteworthy contribution to the study of these writings and their influence. It is based on wide acquaintance with ancient and modern literature, and on a sympathetic study of the apocalyptic works themselves.

H. H. Rowley

FRIENDS FOR 300 YEARS

In connexion with the Tercentenary of the founding of the Society of Friends, which was celebrated last year, Dr. Howard Brinton, a leading American Friend and a distinguished scholar, wrote a lucid and valuable survey of Quaker beliefs and practice as these have taken shape over the last three hundred years—*Friends for 300 Years*. An English edition has now been published by Messrs. Allen and Unwin (15s. net). One whole chapter and a short appendix have been omitted, presumably because they were supposed to be of interest primarily to American readers. This is true of the appendix, but the omission of the chapter on the 'Four Periods of Quaker History' is to be regretted, since it is as informative and original as the rest of the book.

Dr. Brinton has not given us a history of Quakerism. He has preferred to offer illustrations of a method and a spirit which permeate and unite belief and practice. The book is a study of Quakerism as 'a form of group mysticism in which, for all its weaknesses, the power of the divine Spirit to bring unity and harmony into the life both of the individual and of the group has been in a measure demonstrated.' Dr. Brinton handles freshly all the characteristics of the Society of Friends, the fundamental experience of the guidance of the inner light, the interpretation of that experience in terms of doctrine, its outworking in the meeting for worship and the vocal ministry, in the organization of the Society and the conduct of church affairs, in cultural interests and social service.

The closing chapter on 'Quaker Thought and the Present' is of great interest. Dr. Brinton notes how scientific humanism and a secular humanitarianism have tended to weaken both the mystical and the evangelical elements in the Quaker tradition, but he looks for a renewed appreciation of the primitive Quakerism in which these vital elements were blended, as the mood of shallow optimism about human nature and human progress has been shattered by two world wars. He finds himself more in sympathy with Robert Barclay's attitude than did most thoughtful Quakers earlier in the century. 'Barclay was pessimistic regarding what he called "natural" man's present condition, but optimistic in regard to man's capacity for regeneration and union with God even in this life.' While rejecting much of Barclay's terminology, Dr. Brinton presents a view of Quakerism not unlike that of the great apologist for the beliefs and practice of Friends. The book is a worthy successor to Rufus Jones's 'The Faith and Practice of the Quakers.'

H. G. Wood

RELIGION AND THE MODERN MIND

The volume with the title given above, by Professor W. T. Stace (Macmillan; 21s. net), is rather gloomy in its analysis of the present situation, and the solution of difficulties which is suggested is not altogether free from the suspicion of escapism. A setting for the main problem is given by a most excellent historical comparison between the medieval and the modern mind; and, on the whole, the tendency of the latter is found to be unfavourable to a belief in God, or in world-purpose, or in the objectivity of morals. But Professor Stace's main position is that there is no really logical connexion between the triumphs of science and the prevalence of scepticism. It is a mistake, he thinks, to concentrate attention upon antagonisms between particular discoveries of science and particular dogmas of religion (many of them outmoded) and often the supposed implications of science are logical muddles. Mutual depreciation leads nowhere. The scientific point of view is wholly justified, and the traditional proofs of the existence of God have no validity left in them. But on the other hand, he contends, the religious point of view is also fully justified, and it was the merit of Kant to face boldly the discrepancy and to refuse to strengthen one attitude by pointing out the defects of the other. But what is the next step? If two doctrines are contradictory, the only reconciliation, urges Professor Stace, following Kant, is to show that the doctrines apply to two different worlds. Thus the remedy is found to lie in the discovery that all religions—by means no doubt of revelatory myths and images—really testify to a mystical attitude, affirming that there is a way to the spiritual life but that it cannot be described. This is inspired by devotion

to the One, and we need no longer worry about whether mechanism or purposiveness is true or whether morals are merely relative or have an objective basis, seeing that through mystical union the subjective and the objective merge in one another. The general conclusion of the book is beautifully stated, but is more comforting than convincing. W. S. URQUHART

THE THOUGHT OF THE PROPHETS

A welcome contribution to the ever-growing interest in Biblical Theology has been made by the leading liberal Jewish Rabbi, Israel I. Mattuck, in a book entitled *The Thought of the Prophets* (Allen and Unwin; 9s. 6d. net). This is not a study of the successive prophets who arose in Israel one by one, and a characterization of their individual messages, but a study of the ideas which ran through all the prophets. Its several chapters, therefore, deal not with men but with ideas—with the nature of prophecy, the authority of the prophets, their conception of God, the moral law, ethical principles, the Good Life, a just society, religion and politics, true religion, God and human life, the human problem, and the meaning of history. A deep underlying unity is found in the prophets, and the author shows penetration and balance throughout his study. Occasionally the reviewer would differ somewhat in his emphasis. He would put the beginnings of monotheism earlier than the eighth century prophets, and he would not make the prophetic condemnation of sacrifice quite so absolute as Rabbi Mattuck does in some cases. Nevertheless, he commends this book as a whole as an informed, reliable, and suggestive study. In the Preface Sheldon Blank's name has been transformed into Black. H. H. ROWLEY

A pathetic interest attaches to *A Companion to St. John's Gospel* (Cambridge University Press and Melbourne University Press; 12s. 6d. net), by the Rev. J. Stephen Hart, M.A., B.Sc., formerly Bishop of Wangaratta. He lived to see his book in print but passed away before it was published. He was for many years an enthusiastic student of the Fourth Gospel and became ever more convinced that in this Gospel we have the most trustworthy account of the Incarnate Son of God. As John mused on the life of Jesus, so the Bishop read, marked and inwardly digested John. His book is not quite a commentary, it is a deep-sighted spiritual interpretation which will instruct and guide.

The boldly sketched theory of Canon Hubert E. Edwards put forward in *The Disciple Who Wrote These Things* (James Clarke; 12s. 6d. net) would set a long interval between the taking down in shorthand—now known to have been then a familiar art—of oral teaching delivered by John to groups under instruction at Pella, and the subsequent construction, by selection from these verbatim notes, of our gospel. In this way the uncondensed style, and the way in which cross-references are sometimes needlessly obtruded, sometimes obviously lacking, is accounted for.

Canon Edwards interests the reader by treating the subject not as a mere study of documents but as calling for a reconstruction of the process of producing the book. He holds that the simplest explanation of the facts involved is that the Fourth Gospel is quite independent of and earlier than the Synoptics. He stresses that it is designed for evangelism rather than edification; but in view of his own belief that its contents were first spoken for the latter purpose, this point does not seem so important as he feels it. He persuasively argues for the identification of the young man who fled naked from the garden of Gethsemane not with Mark but with the disciple known to the High Priest who brought in Peter, he being also the shorthand writer who took down John's teaching, and in old age made a book from his own notes.

There are many matters in this fresh study which will raise discussion. Confidence in the writer's judgment however is shaken when he elaborates a theory that on Palm Sunday Jesus really tried to enter the city secretly disguised by riding instead of going as usual on foot and by having His Rabbi's dress covered by peasant garments, these being thrown on Him, not on the road; and that when the disciples tried to hush blind Bartimaeus it was not for lack of sympathy but because his shouting was giving away the hitherto concealed unnoticed presence of Jesus in the crowd.

There are a number of good books which may be called primers of Introduction to the New Testament, but we give high praise to a new one—*Towards an Understanding of the Gospels*, by Mr. Edward Smalley (Epworth Press; 6s. 6d. net). Designed for the Scripture lover of ordinary intelligence it puts into his hands an excellent account of the Gospels, their writers and their background. It has the two great merits of being plain and intelligible and yet fully abreast of modern scholarship. It will prove very useful for young people in study circles and divinity students will do well to master it before beginning their more specialized New Testament curriculum. Professor G. H. C. Macgregor contributes a commendatory Foreword.

Philo and the Fourth Gospel

By the Reverend R. M'L. Wilson, B.D., Ph.D., Strathaven

In an article in The Expository Times (lxiii. 385 f.) the Rev. A. W. Argyle has underlined the similarities between the Fourth Gospel and the writings of Philo of Alexandria, and has drawn the conclusion that 'so many resemblances and parallels cannot all be attributed to coincidence. Their cumulative force suggests that to deny any connexion between the Johannine Logos conception and that of Philo would be to throw away a valuable clue to the understanding of the mind and thought of the fourth evangelist.'

The similarities may be acknowledged, but the inference that is to be drawn is not so certain. It may be admitted that the relationship between the writers affords a clue to the understanding of the Gospel, but the vital question concerns the nature of this relationship. That there is some connexion appears to be clear enough from the evidence, but that the connexion is one of dependence on the part of John is not at all established. It would seem indeed more accurate to say that the works of Philo *illustrate* the methods and usage of the evangelist than that John is directly indebted to the Alexandrian scholar.[1] Kennedy, for example, can say of the Christian Fathers that 'at a time when they were eagerly seeking to bridge the gulf between the new religion and the old philosophy . . . they found in Philo, the Jew, a thinker who had already attempted to reconcile the claims of reason and revelation.'[2] This is established fact, but the question at issue here is whether this statement is true also of the author of our Fourth Gospel. We must ask not merely is this a possible, but is it a *necessary* explanation. 'The theory that the prologue is directly dependent upon the writings of Philo,' says Hoskyns,[3] 'or upon the school of Alexandrian thought of which Philo was the most eminent representative, is undeniably attractive. But it rests upon a series of assumptions that can be justified only if it be held that parallel imagery demands a literary relationship.' So also Temple remarks 'I have no doubt that in a general sense St. John is here following the thought of Philo; but this does not mean that he was a student of Philo's writings.'[4]

[1] Cf. H. A. A. Kennedy, *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, 46 ff., and in particular the estimate of the discourses of the Fourth Gospel in the light of Philo's practice (*ib.*, 50).

[2] *Ib.*, 1.

[3] *The Fourth Gospel*, 158.

[4] *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, 4.

Reitzenstein, one of the pioneers in the *religionsgeschichtlich* field of study, once wrote of 'a certain colour-blindness' which tends to affect the student, so that each according to the trend of his researches claims to find links and associations with his own particular branch, to the virtual exclusion of other possibilities.[5] Nowhere perhaps is it more easy to form a false impression, to discover associations and lines of kinship which a closer examination or some addition to our knowledge may prove to be without foundation. 'The progress of research in Hellenistic thought,' wrote Kennedy, 'continually puts us on our guard against the tendency to trace kinship along a single line.'[6] So much of the literature of the period has completely perished that we cannot be entirely sure that the apparent dependence is not due to some other factor. And even as it is the field of our study is not limited to Philo and the Fourth Gospel. The documents of the Hermetic Corpus,[7] some of the Epistles of Paul, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, all show traces of the same line of thought. It may, therefore, perhaps be suggested that in the case before us we have not dependence on the part of the fourth evangelist but rather a common theological background and climate of thought, that in fact in studying the works of Philo we are moving, in Kennedy's words, 'in an atmosphere in which the way of the Lord is being prepared.'[8]

Philo himself stands at the culmination of a process, the last of a long succession of interpreters.[9] He speaks himself of those who had gone before, and sometimes corrects their interpretations. It is not clear how far he is to be considered as typical of his period, or representative of a group, and he has indeed been treated as a more or less isolated figure. Certainly not all Jews would share his interest in the wisdom of the Greeks, or

[5] In his volume *Poimandres* (see the translation of the passage referred to in Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, p. xv).

[6] *Op. cit.*, 177.

[7] Cf. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, part ii.

[8] *Op. cit.*, 151.

[9] Cf. Bousset, *Jüdisch-christlicher Schulbetrieb in Alexandria und Rom*, *e.g.* on p. 43: 'between him and his Greek authorities stands the medium of older sources of Jewish tradition'; see also Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 8, 32 ff., and on Philo's use of sources Knox, *Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity*, 47 ff.

in the exposition of the Jewish Scriptures in the light of contemporary theory, and there is an ever-present danger of regarding him as characteristic. It may well be that some of his predecessors had advanced some variation of the general theme which was taken up and developed in later days, even as the later Gnostics were to present different modifications and adaptations of the same basic theories. It is even possible that there was some kind of a Graeco-Jewish philosophy, a part of the legacy left by the Diaspora as a preparation for the gospel. Of such a philosophy Philo would indeed be a representative, but he need not have been the only one.

The purpose of Philo's writings was evidently to make Judaism intellectually respectable in the eyes of the Gentile world,[1] to interpret and expound the sacred literature of the Jewish people in the light of the contemporary philosophy and theology of the Hellenistic Age, which was an amalgam largely compounded of Platonism and Stoicism and associated with the name of Posidonius.[2] The author of the Fourth Gospel was writing in a similar environment, if not quite with a similar end in view.[3] But that the evangelist was indebted to his Jewish precursor, or that at certain points he is deliberately correcting him, must be regarded as simply 'not proven.' Windisch indeed calls John the Philo of the New Testament,[4] but this is to go too far. It may be of significance that according to tradition the Fourth Gospel was composed in Ephesus, the city of the Greek philosopher Heraclitus from whom the whole theory of the Logos ultimately derives; and Ephesus, as Kennedy says, 'was not likely to remain indifferent to the far-reaching developments of the idea, whether among the Stoics or in Philo.'[5] On the other hand, Hoskyns observes that 'apart from the first half of *v.* 14, *and the Word became flesh*, the very confident use of the Word rather than the Wisdom of God, and the clear ascription of personality rather than the mere literary personification of the Word (Wisdom)—apart from these things, the thought, phraseology, and even the rhythm of the prologue can be closely paralleled in the language of the Jewish Scriptures.'[6] 'The workshop in which the Word of God was forged to take its natural place among the great theological descriptions of Jesus and His work is a Christian workshop: the tools are Christian tools. The apostolic theologians and evangelists of the primitive Church no doubt inherited this vocabulary from the Jews, but they transformed it in order to express what had been given them by Jesus.'[7]

The fact of the matter is that both John and Philo are working within the limits of the Hellenistic popular philosophy, with a cosmogony which goes back to the *Timæus* of Plato as modified and adapted by the Stoics. But where Philo's purpose is to read back into the Old Testament as much as possible of this contemporary philosophy, thus demonstrating that all the wisdom of the Greeks was already known to Moses,[8] John is employing the current forms and terminology for the single purpose of commending the gospel of the Risen Christ. It is the fact of Christ that is the dominant element behind his work. The language and the forms of thought may offer points of contact with the ideas of the Gentile world, but for the Gentile reader his message is that of Paul at Athens: 'Whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.'[9] His first and chief concern is to proclaim that the living Truth, the Light that lighteth every man, the very Word of God Himself has in Jesus of Nazareth entered into the world for the fulfilment of the purpose of God. In his own way he is presenting exactly the same proclamation as Paul in the Epistle to the Colossians, or the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But as

[1] Cf. Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, p. x.

[2] Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, 62; cf. Bevan, *Stoics and Sceptics*, 85 ff., Reitzenstein, *Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen* [3rd ed.], 134, Wendland, *Die Hellenistisch-römische Kultur*, 60 f., 134, 206–7. Further references in Kirk, *The Vision of God*, 33 note 1. See also Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, 277 note 2 and index.

[3] Cf. Hoskyns, *op. cit.*, 159: 'The gospel was written pastorally for Christians and polemically against Jews'; 'there is nothing in the gospel, except the prologue interpreted from one point of view, to suggest that it was written to recommend Christianity in terms of Greek thought.' On the other side, cf. Knox, *Some Hellenistic Elements*, 55 ff. This much at least is true, that despite its Jewish background and character the Gospel could and did appeal to the Gentile world.

[4] *Die Frömmigkeit Philos*, 113 ff.

[5] *Op. cit.*, 177.

[6] *Op. cit.*, 152.

[7] *Op. cit.*, 162 f. Knox's conclusion may be quoted (*Some Hellenistic Elements*, 89): 'The greatness of the Gospel lies in the fact that while it interprets the life of Jesus in terms of the theology of the age, it never loses sight of the concrete historical figure of the synoptic tradition, or of love as the distinctive quality of Christianity.'

[8] This, however, is more or less a commonplace of Jewish literary propaganda. Cf. Aristobulus ap. Euseb. *Praep. Ev.*, xiii. 12; Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, II. iii. 238 ff.; and the references in Swete, *Introduction to the O.T. in Greek*, 1–2. The theory is summed up by Numenius ap. Euseb. *Praep. Ev.*, ix. 6: 'What is Plato, but Moses talking Attic?'

[9] Ac 17^{23}.

Kennedy remarks, and Mr. Argyle acknowledges, ' to Philo, as to any of his pagan contemporaries, it would have appeared an inversion of all values, whether religious or metaphysical, that the Evangelist should have dared the tremendous assertion : " The Logos became flesh, and dwelt among us." ' [1]

Syncretism is a characteristic feature of the world of New Testament times, and Christianity is itself in a sense a syncretistic religion. But the syncretism of the New Testament is not the type that was current in the surrounding world, a type which Norden would prefer to call ' theocrasia.' [2] The fundamental concern of the New Testament writers was not the accommodation of their faith to the ideas of the world around, but the proclamation of the gospel. For this purpose they employed the language and ideas of their time, as they used the Roman roads on their journeys from place to place. Everything is subordinated to the fundamental aim. Like Philo, Paul and John and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews all are Jews.[3] All three like Philo have behind them the riches of the Old Testament tradition. All three in some degree presuppose a Hellenistic environment, and draw upon the ideas of that environment for the presentation of their message. But, again, there is a difference, the difference that is made by the fact of Christ.[4] Paul sums up the situation accurately in saying ' We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness '. [5]

In the Christian gospel there is something completely new, something which yet may be claimed as the fulfilment of the hopes and aspirations of the Old Testament. In the search for sources we need go no further than the Old Testament itself, as seen and interpreted in the light of the Person and work of Jesus. But the gospel is also universal in its range. It had to be translated into a form that would carry weight with the Gentile world ; and the transformation effected by its presentation in Greek dress inevitably afforded links and associations with the hopes and aspirations of other nations, not least with those which sprang from the same original source in the Jewish faith. The works of Philo illustrate the background of ideas and the forms of thought that were current ; they help us to understand the way in which the gospel was presented ; they help to show the relevance of the gospel to the needs of men in that time. To go further is to venture beyond the safe ground of certainty into the realms of pure conjecture.

To take one point only, ' Philo's Logos is the Image of God and Mediator between God and man, revealing God to man and leading man to God.' [6] For this there are parallels in the Fourth Gospel, and naturally, since this is precisely the function performed not in speculative theory but in fact by Jesus. But Paul, too, speaks of Jesus as ' the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature,' in truly Philonic language ; and the Epistle to the Hebrews begins with a description of the Son as ' the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.' [7] Are we then to say that Paul and Hebrews also are indebted to the Jew of Alexandria ? Or if that were so, would there not be a far greater similarity between their works ? And what is to be said of the famous Johannine intrusion in Mt 11^{27} ? Surely it is much more probable that all in their several ways are drawing upon the language of their environment,[8] Philo as a devout Jewish thinker the foundation of whose faith is set in the religion of the Old Testament, but who has learned to value and appreciate the wisdom of a wider world, the New Testament writers as men concerned to carry into all the world the gospel of the Risen Lord. Closer affinity there may be, some Graeco-Jewish system of thought that has exercised its influence upon them all ; but this cannot be proved.

The works of Philo indeed afford a valuable clue, but not to the source of the ideas which John is concerned to express. Rather do the methods of Philo shed light on the methods of John, his writings show the nature of the ideas and aspirations which then were current. His writings form a witness of the first importance to the character of his age, to the life and thought of that world to which Christianity made its first appeal.

[1] Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 177 ; Argyle, *op. cit.*, 385.

[2] *Agnostos Theos*, 109.

[3] Cf. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 20 f.

[4] Cf. Hoskyns, 152–164 for John ; so also Kennedy again and again observes that Philo's conceptions are far less rich in content than those of Paul or John. It is indeed the prominence of this very fact of Christ that distinguishes the ' hellenisation ' of the Gospel at the hands of the New Testament writers from the far more radical efforts of the later Gnostics, who amid their speculations lost their hold on the fundamental elements.

[5] 1 Co 1^{23}.

[6] Argyle, *op. cit.*, 386.

[7] Col 1^{15}, He 1^{3}.

[8] Mt 11^{27} is, however, more probably to be regarded as a pointer not to some vague Hellenistic theory but to the true source of the New Testament doctrines, in the mind and consciousness of Jesus Himself. At least it shows that the Johannine discourses are not so far removed from the actual words of Jesus as has been thought.

The Copenhagen Old Testament Congress

By Professor H. H. Rowley, M.A., D.D., B.Litt., The University of Manchester

Three years ago, at the International Conference held in Leiden, the International Organization of Old Testament Scholars was formed, and its international journal *Vetus Testamentum* launched. It was then decided to hold the first Congress of the new organization in Copenhagen in August 1953, under the presidency of Professor Aage Bentzen. Unhappily, Professor Bentzen, who had lived and worked for this Congress, died suddenly less than three months before it met. Through the devotion of his widow, and help given by a number of persons, including especially Professor P. A. H. de Boer, of Leiden, the arrangements were carried through, and more than a hundred and fifty persons from more than twenty countries gathered in Copenhagen. A few who had planned to be there were prevented by various reasons from coming, and these included two who were on the programme to read papers—Professor I. Engnell, of Uppsala, who was ill, and Professor A. Parrot, of Paris, who had had to proceed to Mesopotamia for further excavations at Mari.

The members were received with splendid hospitality by our Danish friends. The Congress was supported by grants from the Danish Ministry of Education, and by the Trustees of the Rask-Østed Fund, and there were two lavish receptions to which the members were invited. Of these one was given in Christiansborg by the Minister of Education, Professor F. F. Hvidberg, himself an Old Testament scholar, who had published important works in this field before he was involved in political and administrative duties. Both he and Mrs. Hvidberg won the hearts of all members by their graciousness and charm, and by the generous measure of their time which they gave to the Congress. The other reception was given by Professor Johannes Pedersen at the Carlsberg Brewery. Professor Pedersen, who is well known in this country and who has a host of friends in Britain, is the Chairman of the Carlsberg Foundation, which owns the brewery, and which devotes the profits it makes to many cultural objects in Denmark. Further, there was an excursion to the palaces of Frederiksborg, Fredensborg, and Kronborg. The first of these is now a Historical Museum, which is managed by the Carlsberg Foundation, and the last is at Elsinore and is associated with *Hamlet*. Unhappily, it was impossible to enter Frederiksborg, owing to the sudden death of the Director, whose funeral took place on the day of our visit.

At the opening session addresses were given by Professor Hvidberg, who welcomed the Congress in his capacity as Minister of Education, by the Rector of the University, by Professor S. Mowinckel, who gave a short memorial address on Professor Bentzen, and by Professor Pedersen, who spoke of the developments in Old Testament scholarship during his working life.

Of the papers presented to the Congress only brief notes can here be given. This year is the two hundredth anniversary of the publication of Lowth's *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum*, and of Astruc's *Conjectures*, each of which marked in its way an epoch in Old Testament study. Several of the papers owed their subjects to this bi-centenary. Professor T. H. Robinson reviewed the study of Hebrew poetic forms from Lowth to the present time, with special reference to English work. Professor G. R. Driver studied the Aramaic element in the Hebrew vocabulary, and showed that it is greater in poetry than in prose, though he was very cautious in his conclusions, in view of the paucity of our sources of information, and the possibility that what appear to be Aramaisms may not really be such. Professor J. Muilenburg offered a study of the literary device of repetition in the Old Testament, marked by a fine literary sense and appreciation for the effectively varied ways in which it is used. Professor R. de Vaux gave a valuable and lucid review of Pentateuchal Criticism from Astruc to the present time, and while he examined critically some of the recent challenges to the Wellhausen view and held that many of the elements of that view are secure, he called for a more fluid view and one less simple, and for the recognition that Moses is the true Father of the Pentateuch, though not its author in its present form.

Other papers included one by Professor A. Dupont-Sommer on the early history of the Aramaeans, adducing a number of references, both published and unpublished, which show that the Aramaeans were to be found from the Euphrates to the Syrian coast at various points in the second millennium B.C. In view of the Biblical tradition that the Hebrews were of Aramaean stock and had relations with Aramaeans in Mesopotamia in the patriarchal age this is not without value for Biblical students. Professor G. von Rad studied the relations of the Joseph story to early Wisdom Literature, and showed that the motifs of the story figure in many maxims of the Wise, and

concluded that the Joseph story is a piece of didactic literature which belongs to the early Wisdom Literature. Professor J. Lindblom, who with fine spirit attended the Conference though he was due to undergo a serious operation immediately on his return to Lund, dealt with the Blessing of Jacob and the Shiloh passage. He argued that the period reflected was that of David's reign in Hebron, when Reuben's leadership was about to end, when the Joseph tribes were strong but without a king, and when Judah had a king, who was not yet the king over all the tribes. Shiloh was therefore taken to be a symbol of the northern tribes, which were promised to Judah's king.

Professor B. Gemser, of Pretoria, read a most instructive paper on the Motive Clause in Hebrew Law, showing that this is peculiar to the Biblical Codes and was not found in other ancient Near Eastern codes known to us, and that it found expression in several varieties of motives. It is found in all the Hebrew codes of every period, and more frequently in the later ones, and it belongs to both casuistical and apodictic laws. Professor A. R. Johnson examined the primary meaning of the Hebrew root *ga'al*, and found that it meant *to cover*. This developed the meaning of *protect*, on the one hand, and of *defile*, on the other. He therefore brought together two roots *ga'al*, which are commonly held to be distinct, and finished by turning to the passages where God is spoken of as *go'el*, where he would translate by *Protector*.

Professor Th. C. Vriezen spoke on prophecy and eschatology, holding that while in the narrower sense of the *Endgeschichte* eschatology is not to be sought in the prophets, the word may be legitimately given a wider sense of a renovation within the framework of history, and in this sense there is eschatology in the prophets. He distinguished four periods, the first antedating the eighth-century prophets, the second represented by proto-Isaiah, the third by Deutero-Isaiah, and the fourth characteristic of the apocalyptists.

Professor I. L. Seeligmann, of Jerusalem, spoke on early principles of exegesis, and adduced illustrations from the Bible and elsewhere to show how different was the ancient approach from that of a modern commentator. Before the days of logical interpretation men felt free to indulge in word-plays and any sort of association of ideas, to vary and readapt to serve their purpose. Finally, the paper of Professor Mowinckel calls for mention. He dealt with the famous crux in the *Assumption of Moses*, where Taxo is named, and held that Taxo is a latinization of *τάξων*, which corresponds to the Hebrew *mĕḥoqeq*. He then turned to the literature of the sect from which the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Zadokite Fragments came, where also the *mĕḥoqeq* figures, and held that the *Assumption of Moses* was the work of a member of the same sect.

In addition to these main papers there were some shorter communications. Professor L. Rost announced a forthcoming Concordance to the Hebrew Bible, which will be much less expensive than Mandelkern, and Professor Sander-Hansen told of plans for the publication of Coptic texts of value to the Old Testament scholar, while Professor A. Gil Ulecia told of the finding of some Vulgate MSS. in Spain, containing important variants, and not utilized in the preparation of the great Benedictine edition of the Vulgate. Professor E. Hammershaimb called for a new attempt to produce a critical edition of the Peshitta, together with a Concordance, and the Congress set up a small committee to go into this question. Father de Vaux gave an informal talk, giving the latest information of the finds in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, where fragments of almost every book of the Old Testament have now been found, in addition to many apocryphal books.

On the last morning of the Conference the members were able to buy the volume in which the papers have been published. This is entitled *Congress Volume*, and it is the first volume of a series of *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*.[1] In addition to the main papers presented to the Congress it contains three other papers. One is Professor Parrot's, on ' Altars and Cultic Installations at Mari,' which he had planned to read. Of the twenty-five temples which once existed at Mari, four have been certainly identified and one probably. Professor Parrot describes what can be learned of their furnishing and cultic equipment, and compares it with that of Israelite shrines. Dr. Elias Auerbach has an article on the editing of Biblical books, in which he studies the editorial work of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., and the way in which, despite the sources employed, the editors imposed their views on the whole. In the course of his study Dr. Auerbach rejects some views which have become widely current, such as that Shechem was an ancient central shrine for the Israelite tribes, and that there ever was a Deuteronomic Historical Work. Professor M. Bič, of Prague, explains the Book of Obadiah in terms of cultic drama, and holds that it is very ancient, antedating the time of Amos.

For those who attended the Congress this volume is a fine memorial ; for those who did not attend it is a valuable window into present-day Old Testament studies. It does not record the dis-

[1] Published by Brill, Leiden, at the price of Fl. 18, but with a reduced price of Fl. 14 for participants in the Congress and subscribers to *Vetus Testamentum*.

cussions on the papers, but these, alas ! were few and brief. Far too little time was available for discussion. The Congress Volume is also a memorial volume to Professor Bentzen, and it contains a fine photograph of him, a short Memorial Notice by Professor Hammershaimb, and a Bibliography of his writings, compiled with the help of one of his students, Mr. F. Willesen.

The Business Meeting of the Organization was presided over by Professor M. Noth, of Bonn. It decided that the next Congress shall be held in Strasbourg in three years' time, under the Presidency of Professor de Vaux. Meanwhile for the day to day administration of the Organization, Professor Driver is its President and Professor Anderson its Secretary. At the closing dinner Professor Driver presided, and made a witty speech in English and French, and amongst other things tokens of appreciation were given to Mrs. Bentzen and Professor de Boer, to whose devoted efforts the carrying through of the Congress was in no small part due.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Bradman's Boots

By the Reverend Charles M. Hepburn, B.D., Crieff

' And your feet shod. . . .'—Eph 6^{15}.

At the finish of the cricket season there appeared a small paragraph, scarcely noticeable, tucked away in a corner of a newspaper. It said that Sir Donald Bradman, possibly the most devastating batsman of all time, had presented to the Memorial Room at Lord's the boots he wore through the Test Matches of 1948, after which he stopped playing in first-class cricket. Lord's is the celebrated London cricket ground, the headquarters of cricket. The Memorial Room has all sorts of souvenirs in it, such as famous bats, photographs, the urn with ' the Ashes,' and now Bradman's boots.

Although somebody said that there may not seem to be much else in a pair of boots except a pair of feet, boots—and shoes, too—are much more interesting than might be thought. In Northampton, where much of our foot-wear is made, is a museum, a section of which is occupied by boots and shoes of all ages and stages. In one case there are the white satin slippers which Queen Victoria wore when she was married. In another case are quaint Court slippers, some with heels six and a half inches high. Along a wall are two cabinets with samples of all the boots and shoes made for our Forces in the two World Wars—Navy, Army, and Air Force.

And their fame has extended even further, for painters and poets have immortalized them. At an exhibition in Edinburgh once was shown a picture which an American artist painted. In common with many of his countrymen he had enlisted in the Army, and one evening after a long route march he took off his boots and flung them on the barrack-room floor. As he sat looking at them, they seemed to tell the story of all the weary foot soldiers in the world. So he took out his paint-box and painted a picture of that pair of boots. Next morning his officer saw the picture and was so impressed he had photographs taken and circulated to all the camps in the United States. At the time of the Coronation again some of us saw a strange thing on the television screen. Suddenly, as we watched the troops marching by, through some disturbance the top half of the picture became for a moment the bottom half, and we saw nothing but a procession of marching boots, which reminded one of Rudyard Kipling's well-known verse :

> Boots—boots—boots—boots—movin' up an' down again.

But, last of all, notice that boots are mentioned, too, in that most wonderful of books, the Bible. It says, ' let your feet be shod,' that is to say, ' put on your boots and shoes.' It was St. Paul who gave us that advice, telling us to put on ' the whole armour of God '—breast-plate, sword, shield, and so forth. For what purpose, though, are our feet to be shod ? Not for making war, for we aren't soldiers of that sort. No, not for that. For this good and great purpose instead, preparing the way of peace. Will you then put your boots on for that ? Will you do your bit to prepare a world where in future days all peoples shall be able to walk in peace ?

Round and Round

By the Reverend J. Ithel Jones, M.A., B.D., London

' There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes : but what are they among so many ? '—Jn 6^{9}.

I've discovered a rather remarkable thing. I should have realized it before but it just didn't

strike me. In eight years I've driven my little car a distance equal to three times around the world! Some of you may know that the distance around the earth—the 'circumference' as we call it—is about twenty-five thousand miles. And now, if you are good at sums, you know that my car registers a mileage of seventy-five thousand miles.

Think of what I could have seen for the amount of petrol I've used! I could have gone to Egypt to see the Pyramids and the Sphinx. I could have gone on to Palestine and seen Nazareth where Jesus lived as a boy and worked in the carpenter's shop, and the Sea of Galilee where Peter and James and John sat mending their nets when Jesus called them to follow Him. Then I could have driven to North India and seen the wonderful Himalaya mountains and at least looked at Everest, which, as you know, is the highest mountain in the world. Then on to Burma, Rangoon, and Singapore; across to the Pacific Islands; over to the Rocky Mountains, a flying visit to Washington, a peep at New York and then back home. (Of course, I'd have had to have a few big bridges built here and there, much bigger than the proposed Severn Bridge!) And I could have done all that journey three times over with the amount of petrol that's gone through the tank of my car!

And yet I don't suppose I've been as far as three hundred miles from the spot at which I started. Doesn't it seem an awful waste of petrol energy!

Well, I suppose that's excusable in the case of a car driver. The trouble is, of course, that there are people who live like that. They have plenty of power—'talent,' we call it—but they don't get very far with it. And the reason for this is that they are not willing to give their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ for Him to direct and use these talents.

There are others whose gifts and good influence travel ever such a distance—just because Jesus uses them. That little boy who had a lunch of five barley loaves and two fishes learnt the secret. If he had kept the lunch to himself it would have fed just one hungry lad in one particular spot. But he gave it to Jesus and it fed five thousand in Galilee and has since taught a wonderful lesson to countless thousands in five continents.

Those Galilean fishermen, apart from Jesus, would have spent a life-time in a very restricted circle. Jesus said to them, 'Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.' They obeyed. And their ministry and influence have travelled down the years and will endure to the end of time.

Remember, your gifts and talents travel farthest when you give them to Jesus.

The Christian Year

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

That Strange Thing—Beauty

BY THE REVEREND CHARLES GIMBLETT, M.A., EXMOUTH

'Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth.'—Ps 50^2 (R.V.).

One hopeful feature of our modern life is what we might call a re-birth of the sense of beauty. It may be in some cases a kind of tormented beauty, the reflection of our jangled discords and troubled minds, but at any rate that strange thing which we call beauty must be taken seriously. It exists in its own right, it is its own argument, and not a mere extra, a decorative embroidery added to real life. To-day the call of Nature and the open air is plain; we notice signs in ordinary everyday life, in dress, pictures, advertisements, as well as in the realm of church architecture and forms of worship. This is all part of the gradual revolt against what William Morris called 'the uglification and vulgarization of life' brought about by the industrial revolution.

Now there is—there must be—a vital connexion between religion and art in general, though it may be a long time before our Christian thinkers can give us a really satisfying philosophy of beauty. We do know that the beauty of holiness is a real fact and force in the lives of the saints; and if, as we believe, God is the Author of all beauty, then we may speak also of the holiness of beauty. Why should it be supposed that Christians are mostly grim and dull, blind and deaf to the glory and charm of things that are lovely? In all fairness we must remember this, that the Christian man—any thoughtful man in fact—knows full well that these things may be a snare, a real danger. Our Lord's plain warning is one we dare not forget; for some people, the artistic temperament you may say, the only safe way is to be willing to pluck out the eye, cut off the foot; better to be a maimed and defective personality rather than lose one's very soul. We do know there is usually a certain strain and tension between these two sides of life—culture and restraint, world-accepting and world-denying. There is the double strand in our heritage; we are the spiritual children of Greece and Zion. A leading thinker has called this one of the great permanent antinomies of human life.

The spirit of man can never be at peace with itself until these strains are overcome, these discords resolved in a final harmony. Then why not say boldly, as so many people do, 'If God is the Author of all beauty, surely we can worship amongst the hills, in the great temple of Nature,

just as well as in a church with its forms and ceremonies.' But *can* we ? Is that really true to the facts as we find them in the lives of the best Christians ? Surely they, for the most part, have not so learned the open secret of the Christian life. They did not become *sure of God* that way, but in the first place through the imperfect offices of prayer and penitence, through united worship with others in Zion. It is true that after that personal encounter with the living God the Christian can in a real sense find Him everywhere. He may turn again to the hills and may even feel ' breathless with adoration,' but after all, he knows that the Kingdom of Nature is not the same as the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the difference, say, between beauty and the perfection of beauty. Human nature being what it is, we may so easily be ensnared, thinking we are religious but actually holding to what is no more than a bogus religion. It is as though one should admire the outside of a lantern and forget the light without which the lantern would have no meaning.

Here, then, is the final answer, the open secret apart from which all else is but a shadow—' The perfection of beauty, God hath shined forth.' That heavenly glory, that Divine Love, is revealed in Jesus Christ the eternal Son. Nothing can take the place of that vision, the vision of ' the King in His beauty, the fairest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely.' As the people watched Him one day healing a poor sufferer, they could not help exclaiming : ' How beautifully He does everything ! ' It was holy love, the perfection of beauty breaking through the thin veil that hides the heavenly glory from our clay-shuttered eyes.

To see that and to respond with all our powers, to reflect something of the beauty of Jesus for others to catch ; to know His touch upon every detail of life ; that is life at its very best. It is indeed as the poet sings

> The richer life where Beauty
> Walks hand in hand with Duty.

So the humble obscure life may be in its own limited way a little work of art, a hymn of praise to the glory of God.

First Sunday in Advent

Present Judgment and Final Judgment

By the Reverend Arthur A. Cowan, D.D., Edinburgh

' This is the judgement, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light ; for their works were evil.'—Jn 3^{19} (R.V.).

' The hour of reckoning has still to come, when the Lord will come to bring dark secrets to the light and to reveal life's inner aims and motives.'—1 Co 4^{5} (Moffatt).

One verse affirms ' realized eschatology,' present judgment ; Christ *has* come as judge. The other verse affirms ' futurist eschatology,' final judgment; Christ *will* come as judge. The New Testament has this twofold outlook on Advent.

1. The Fourth Gospel declares that the long-expected Day of the Lord has come in Christ's life, death and resurrection, and judgment has begun. The Second Advent predicted in the Upper Room discourse is the coming of the Holy Spirit, who is Christ returning in power—' he shall glorify me ' (Jn 16^{14}). Thus the counsel of God, expressed in prophecy and apocalyptic symbolism, is fulfilled, and people are already being judged by their attitude to Christ. When their attitude to Him so hardened that the Cross was near, Jesus Christ said : ' Now is the judgment of this world.'

Of course, the primary purpose of Christ's coming was not to condemn the world but to save the world—the Evangelist makes that clear. Nevertheless, a man passes sentence on himself if he cannot discern and appreciate the best. He is judged by his judgment of a book or a person. George II, who afterwards went mad, disparaged Shakespeare and barked out to Fanny Burney : ' What ? is there not sad stuff ? What ? What ? ' ' Only,' he added, ' one must not say so.' The stupid King must have felt that his criticism did not condemn Shakespeare but condemned himself, when he did not wish it to be mentioned. So any day may be judgment-day for the man who pronounces a hostile verdict on the highest. Jesus Christ confronts people in some crisis of choice which challenges, tests, and exposes them, reveals them to be either for or against Him. They are judged by their judgment of Christ, by their attitude to Him. As Paul Tillich says : ' The decision for or against the truth is the life-and-death decision, and this decision is identical with the decision in which Christ is accepted or rejected. You cannot have *opinion* about Christ after you have faced Him. You can only do the truth by following Him, or do the lie by denying Him.' Mark you ! the Evangelist is not black-listing those doubters who would dearly like to believe but are puzzled and mystified by Christian doctrine, and do not assent to its supernatural theory. No ! He stigmatizes those who are insincere and dishonest in their thinking, who refuse to *do* the truth and follow the light in practice, who will not respond to the best because of the lie in their soul. We pass sentence on ourselves by evasion of Christ or by aversion to Christ. We judge ourselves by distrust and scorn for His mercy, forgiveness and self-sacrifice which are seeking us.

Take an instance. Aldous Huxley relates a conversation in an Italian bookshop when Eustace Barnock, a middle-aged libertine, reflected how fortunate he was to be unmoved by any of the qualms and ideals of religion and to be able to

say 'No!' even to Christ. 'There is nothing I enjoy more,' he remarked with relish, 'than the spectacle of the good trying to propagate their notions and producing results exactly contrary to what they intended. It's the highest form of comedy.' But Bruno, the old bookseller, countered: 'What about the comedy of the clever? Achieving self-destruction in the name of self-interest, and delusion in the name of realism, I sometimes think it is even higher than the comedy of the good.' Eustace Barnock, the lewd cynic, went away with earlier words of Bruno in his memory: 'To be forgiven, forgiven for being what you are'—would he not ponder that? No! he brushed it aside, and that very night he died unexpectedly. 'A sudden call!' the public exclaim. 'What a shock to every one!' But what was more shocking than its suddenness was its squalor. Here was a man confronted by Christ, but to the end he loved the darkness rather than the light because his deeds were evil. To be content to dispense with Christ, to see God's purpose of love marching past without saluting it, joining in it, and moving on to one's higher destiny, to prefer to be left out, alone with bawdy satisfactions—that is to condemn oneself. We are judged by our judgment of Christ, and judgment day is here and now, according to the Fourth Gospel.

2. But the Synoptic Gospels, notably Matthew, look forward to a final judgment at the close of the world-order, when Christ will return in triumph. This is the Second Advent, the Day of the Lord, which the Apostle Paul anticipates. 'The hour of reckoning has still to come, when the Lord will come to bring dark secrets to light and to reveal life's inner aims and motives.' History will not go on for ever as a bedevilled and inconclusive muddle. There will come a time when the issue between good and evil will be decided, when all lies which have masqueraded as truths will be exposed, and Christ will be vindicated as the truth of God—but when? There is the problem.

> No sign! groaned he,
> No stirring of God's finger to denote
> He wills that right should have supremacy
> On earth, not wrong!

Why does Divine power not settle accounts with sin at once, and interpose in human affairs by the break-up of the natural order, as the apocalyptists surmised, to prove that the Christian religion is the winning side? There are two answers to this question. The *first* answer is given by Cullman, who affirms that salvation is already assured in the crucified, arisen Christ. 'The decisive battle in a war may be fought at a comparatively early stage in the campaign, yet the war may go on for a long time . . . before "Victory Day" comes.' The future belongs to Christ. That is the good news which thrills our hearts as we go into action for Christ to-day. The *second* answer is in the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, which tells how good and evil grow together and try to choke each other through the centuries. But the roots of the two are so interlaced that it is impossible to destroy the one without destroying the other. Wheat and tares must ripen side by side, the conflict must be fought to a finish. Yes, and there will be a great finish, an abundant harvest, when Christ returns to reap the grain and discard the weeds. This is the Last Judgment, the ultimate decision, which proves that Christ reigns. 'The hour of reckoning has still to come.' Such is the consummation of the meaning and purpose which have been working out unobserved in history, and this consummation lies beyond history, when time has come to an end.

The Kingdom of God has come—that is true, and yet we still pray, 'Thy Kingdom come!'

> Thou whose face gives grace
> As the sun's doth heat,
> Let thy sunbright face
> Lighten time and space
> Here beneath thy feet.

The Divine light has shone into the world and the New Testament looks on the advent of Christ as present judgment on those who reject Him. But the New Testament also looks forward to another advent which will be the final judgment.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT—BIBLE SUNDAY

The Key of Knowledge

BY THE REVEREND PROFESSOR NORMAN H. SNAITH, D.D., WESLEY COLLEGE, HEADINGLEY, LEEDS

'Ye took away the key of knowledge.'—Lk 11^{52} (R.V.).

The charge of the Lord Jesus Christ against the scribes was: 'Ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.' The essence of this charge is that they were nowhere near the centre and core of true religion. 'They hadn't a clue.' The result was that, not having the key themselves, they never entered that Temple of the Lord where God in truth meets with men, the only temple that matters, whatever sort of building or no sort of building at all. What was even worse, because they did not have the key, they mis-led the people, either through the wrong door and into the ditch (Lk 6^{39}), or left them outside and called them 'publicans and sinners.'

For all things there is a key, and none can enter into the knowledge of that thing unless he has the

key. The difference between a real teacher and the person who packs wads of facts into brain-pans is that the teacher has the key and knows how and when to hand it over. His result is an orderly, sensible file; the other creates a waste-paper basket. You must have the key. Many years ago I saw my first game of American football. It was in Chicago. I did not know a soul in the city, and I went to the Grid by myself, knowing nothing of the rules of the game and less than nothing of the tactics and technique. I came away convinced that it was a silly game. But when I saw my first game of baseball, I did not make that mistake. I got myself taken by a baseball fan, who was also a Christian and a gentleman, at least enough of both to be generous enough to explain to me as the game went along what it was all about; why the pitcher deliberately missed the plate three times, or whether 'double play' was the correct technique at that point. Baseball is a remarkably good game, and a truly skilled game. Whilst I am very far from knowing the technique of the game, I know enough to admire and enjoy. To that extent I have the key. But you must have the key.

It is the same with books. Crime and detective stories are different, and to some extent novels also (though Anthony Trollope likes you to know the plot beforehand), but in the case of all 'serious' books the author should state plainly in the Preface why he wrote the book and what he set out to say. The reader can then get full benefit beginning from the first page. He is on the side of the author, looking from the same angle, and therefore able to get the exact slant which is necessary to the proper understanding of the book.

The scribes did not have the key, and they got the whole thing wrong. They said, for instance, 'Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.' They taught that a man is saved by his own works and that he can acquire eternal life by observing the precepts of the Law (cf. *The Apocalypse of Baruch*, edited by R. H. Charles). The Lord Jesus once told a story which distinguished between the man who has the key and the man who has not the key. One curious feature of the story is that the man who thought he had it was the one who had not, and the man who never dreamed that he could possess it already had it surely enough in his empty hands. Maybe it was actually because his hands were empty that he had it; indeed this strange topsy-turvydom is part of the secret of the key. The story is in Lk 18^{9-14}; it is the story of the two men who went up into the Temple to pray, 'the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.' It was the publican, the outcast who could do nothing but beat his breast and cry for mercy—this was the one who was justified. By 'justified' we mean 'got right with God,' could become conscious of the Presence of God as a cleansing, joyful, invigorating stream coursing in and through him. This is the first stage in Salvation. It is the first experience which comes when once we have found the key, turned it, and hesitatingly or desperately pushed. The technical word is Justification, and it refers to the initial stage of Salvation. It means getting right with God. It is through Faith Alone, that is, on our side all that is required is repentance and trust, making no claim whatever for ourselves, but casting ourselves wholly on Him, depending solely on His mercy and forgiveness. This is precisely why the publican went home justified rather than the Pharisee. The Pharisee claimed everything, the publican nothing. Martin Luther held that this doctrine of Justification through Faith Alone is the key to the Scriptures, the key to knowledge. Certain it is that no man can understand the Bible unless he starts with that. If he starts with something else, he will get an answer, and he may even be sure that his answer is *the* answer. The Pharisee was sure like that, just as were all the scribes whom the Lord Jesus condemned as blind guides, keyless, clueless men.

I believe that Martin Luther was right. The key to the Bible, the key to true religion, the key to knowledge of God is this doctrine of Justification through Faith Alone. No man can know either the comforts or the joy of religion except he first comes to God truly repentant for his past sins and fully trusting in God's great mercy. It involves trust in the God who 'was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.' The basis of it is the grace of God, so that from God's side it is 'by grace,' and from our side it is 'through faith.' Without God's grace, that is, apart from His unrestricted, overflowing love to undeserving sinners, there is no salvation, no joy or peace or serenity for man, here or hereafter. This grace is free for all, but the condition is Faith, a complete reliance upon God's grace as manifested in Christ crucified. The subsequent demand is a higher demand in ethical conduct than any moralist can frame, the whole list of the 'fruit of the Spirit.' But this is afterwards, not at the beginning.

But why is this so? Why is it that Faith Alone is the key both to the Bible and to the whole of religion? The answer is that religion is primarily a matter of relationship with God. It is not primarily a matter of ethics. If it were, our wisdom would be to work out all our rules of conduct down to the smallest detail, and strive earnestly to fulfil every jot and tittle. This is what the Pharisees did, and were condemned for it. Just as if you believe that the key is in Worship, you must work out all your procedure, every slightest

detail and every minutia of observance in both word and act. This also is what the Pharisees did and compelled the priests to do it. The Pharisees sought to make themselves fit for fellowship with God by the strict observance of the Law, both in its relations between man and man and in its instructions as to the way in which man must approach God. To all such, Justification by Faith is rank foolishness or a plain stumbling-block. On the other hand, if you realise that religion is first and foremost a matter of relationship with God (and after that, 'such good works as He has prepared for us to walk in'), then you know that trust is the prime essential. The human example is marriage which can be the truest, the best and the most intimate of all human relationships. The basis of a happy marriage is mutual love and trust. Both parties must show a self-giving love and a complete trust in each other. The husband may fulfil all sorts of duties, do his share and perhaps even more than his share of household duties in these days, be faithful and all the rest, but unless there is that complete love and full trust, the marriage is not the truly happy relationship that it was intended to be. This is why the 'house-proud' wife can destroy a marriage, even though the house is as clean as a new pin and the meals as regular and perfect as clockwork. Turning to religion, the utter self-giving is already there on God's side. That is what the Cross is saying and doing. There must be a full self-giving on our side before the relationship can be established. Nothing else is needed apart from this self-giving trust. This is the secret; this is the key; Faith Alone.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER ADVENT

Is Jesus Christ God's Last Word to Man?

BY THE VERY REVEREND GEORGE JOHNSTONE JEFFREY, D.D., GLASGOW

'Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?'—Mt $11^{2.3}$.

How comforting it is to men of all generations that this most human incident should have been recorded! John in prison, with his world shrunk to a little space, with idleness forced upon him, with his faith sagging and his hope going out like a guttering candle—and John in the great open desert horizons, his body disciplined by active exercise and simple fare, his heart ablaze with his challenge to repentance to the souls of men—here, surely are two utterly different men. But, knowing ourselves, we answer, 'No. Such duality makes us all wondrous kin. We, too, have had our morbid moods when we lose all sense of proportion and wrestle with "the ultimate doubt." We also have had our days of crowded, practical service when faith shines with its own light.' How good it is, that in the experience of this great spirit long ago we should see ourselves as in a mirror. How comforting that men of giant courage and faith should have their days of frailty and unbelief like ourselves.

In this incident there are two invaluable lessons for us. The first is plain for all to learn. The second goes much deeper, and forces on all who value an honest faith a question they dare not evade.

Take the first of these. There are trying ordeals in all our lives, days of depleted strength and overtaxed brain when God has to remind us of a truth that is as simple as it is salutary. *There is a great deal happening in this world which we do not see.* In that wise and intriguing book, *The Comments of Bagshot*, the writer forces open the gates of a disabling, self-enclosed mood by conjuring up before his imagination, 'vast masses of water in mid-Atlantic under the moon, crashing of ice at the poles, tropical forests under a blazing sun in central Africa, beasts of prey and their violent life in the jungle, swarming cities of Orientals, solitary men on ranch and prairie, crowds in the markets and stock exchanges—endless forms of life and death, at all hours of day and night simultaneously.' It was by a similar process of mental and spiritual enlargement that Jesus sought to release John from the prison of his drooping faith. 'While you are pining in an idleness that is all against the grain, the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them.' What a great spiritual enfranchisement comes to us, when it is borne in on us that, in places far beyond our reach and in ways beyond our ken, the work of God's Kingdom goes on quietly, faithfully, successfully, *though we are not there to see it.*

Jesus Christ was infinitely tender with His gallant forerunner in his temporary eclipse of faith. Let us lay the lesson to heart. When we are tempted to give up the good fight of faith because, in our circumscribed sphere, so little seems to happen, let us lift up our hearts unto the hills of vision whence we may see the tens of thousands who 'at His bidding speed' serving the needs and distresses of humanity. Let us tell ourselves, and let us tell the outsider, how men who have been blind to them, have now seen life's noble possibilities, how men who have stumbled have been lifted to their feet, let us declare with pride what our church is doing for the leper, for folks in factories and hospitals, for the questing young, for the weary old, for all whose hearts ache for the healing of the everlasting gospel.

We pass to the deeper question which emerges for us out of the darkness of John's prison experience—*Is Christ God's final revelation to the heart of man?*

Light is shed on this question by a great deep word of Scripture. Of Jesus we are told that '*He knew what was in man.*' In this disarmingly simple, monosyllabic utterance there is a precious treasure of illumination and hope. What it implies is this. Christ's knowledge of the human heart was so eerie, so uncanny, nay, so divine, that we Christians cannot envisage any human situation, international, racial, or personal, on which Jesus Christ will not have a final, healing word to say. Come to think of it, have all our modern inventions and discoveries, telephones, wireless, television and so forth in any deep sense affected the workings of our human hearts? The conditions of the Man of Nazareth, humanly speaking, were primitive and simple to the last degree. Yet in the days of His flesh also, babes were born, men wooed and won their mates, did their day's work, enjoyed their leisure, stood in awe before sunrise and sunset, fought the battle of the flesh and the spirit, mourned their beloved dead. Jesus stands amid conditions to-day that are fundamentally the same and still 'He knows what is in man'—these hearts in their strength and weakness, their glory and their shame, in their inarticulate longings, their ignoble evasions, in their capacity for Godlike heroism. What an education it is to take a turn up and down the scenes of the New Testament and watch Jesus making these searching contacts with the secret workings of men's hearts. Some one has said that we human beings are like islands and we spend half of our lives peering into other hearts seeking for a place to land. What it takes us months and years to discover Jesus seemed to know by instinct, and instantaneously. To the palsied man He said not only, 'Rise, take up thy bed and walk' but, going at once to the man's deeper need, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee.' To the woman by the well He unveils, as by some magic all His own, her past dim life so that she exclaims in wonderment 'Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did.' How good it is to dwell on the positive side of this knowledge of Christ's, its healing, constructive side. For there is a practical inference here which discovers Christ's open secret of spiritual influence. It is this. *A heart of love is for ever setting free unimagined powers for good in a heart that is fluctuating between good and evil.* To quote Bagshot once more, 'whence does the flower draw its scent? I have had a narcissus bulb growing in a pot in my room. I have watched it send up its shoot and come into bud, and yet not till the moment when the bud opens and it breaks into flower have I ever discovered the faintest trace of the coming scent. Then in a second, it comes from nowhere and fills my room with its fragrance. *A human being will suddenly perform this miracle for us like a flower.*' The gospel story is that of one soul after another performing this miracle at the touch of Christ—the unstable Peter becoming the man of rock, the hardened quisling Zacchaeus becoming the generous friend of his fellow-men, the bitter antagonist Saul of Tarsus, becoming the mighty protagonist, Paul the Apostle. And to this day, in countless, ordinary lives, weakness passes into strength and sheer unloveableness blossoms into Christian fragrance.

O heart of Christ, full of patient understanding love, how shall these hearts of ours ever deceive themselves with the thought that Thy day with us is over and that Thy power to strengthen our wills, comfort our afflictions and heal us of our despisings has reached its limits and we must await the appearance on this earth of another who will save us where Thou hast failed? Even to put such a thought into words is a ghastly treachery to the amazing, forbearing, inexhaustible love and grace which have grappled Thee to our heart of hearts. As deep calling unto deep, these hearts echo Thy heart—'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.'

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

A Chosen Race

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. KENT, M.A., CATHCART, GLASGOW

'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.'—1 P 2[9].

Here is the distinctive mark of a Christian. He is a man under call. He bears the name of Christ not because of his own virtue or of certain conclusions he has drawn from life but because he has responded to a call.

Read the Bible and see how every one who has left his mark for good upon its pages has heard a voice and obeyed it. A strange, indefinable sense of a beckoning hand and Abraham goes out on the long trek not knowing whither. An acacia tree flaming and crackling and Moses whips off his shoes at the sound of a voice. The stillness of the night shattered by the mention of a name and Samuel is the Lord's. Unfold the Bible's roll of honour and you find the decisive point in every distinguished career at a call.

Similarly the flame of New Testament faith is kindled by a call. From the lakeside, the fig tree, the collector's desk the disciples of Jesus are drawn

around Him at the sound of His call. Paul is arrested in his headlong campaign of destruction, his fury abated and his life changed by the supernatural summons of Jesus. Dip anywhere into the long story of the Christian movement and you will find men and women in all generations joining the ranks of Christ's Kingdom as He names them and says, ' Follow me.'

Could we gather the Christians of two thousand years into the Upper Room and watch them as they listen to the last discourse of their Master we would see them bowing their heads in assent as they hear Jesus say, ' Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.' Not in a clear intellectual apprehension of the truth or in any moral quality to which they have attained does the secret of their discipleship lie. They bear Christ's name and engage in the hostilities of His warfare because they were confronted by Jesus and personally invited into His comradeship.

So Peter reminds his fellow-Christians of the distinctiveness of their calling as he rallies them to the faith. They are being oppressed and ostracized. They are suffering from the unwelcome attentions of Government officials and society is making them feel odd and eccentric by its pin-pricking and cold-shouldering. Under these circumstances they are becoming hesitant, doubtful, and alarmed.

' Don't give in,' Peter cries. ' Remember the darkness in which once you lived and how, without asking or effort, you were ushered into Christ's wonderful light by His call. From the mass of mankind He singled you out. He hand-picked you by His wisdom and love. *You are a chosen race.*'

That is a noble but very bold claim for Peter to make. Take a glance at the peoples who populate the world and you see that they fall into groups, each clearly differentiated from the other. It may be their colour that marks them off ; or it may be certain physical features that tell of their kind ; or perhaps it is the blood that flows in their veins. Whatever it is it identifies them as members of a particular race. Among these races the Christians take their place, unique and separate. They too have their identifying characteristic. It lies in this sense of being called, in the experience of being selected by the love of God in Jesus Christ and set apart—a chosen race.

How can we justify such a claim ? Listen to how Dr. Denney used to put it. Speaking of that ancient world in which Peter's friends lived, with its dark despair, its deep weariness, its sated lust, he would say : ' Suddenly a change came. Men appeared in that lost world with an infinite hope in their hearts—an assured and triumphant hope, to be holy as God is holy ; and it spread from heart to heart till in the Christian Church a new people became visible upon earth, a society which with all its imperfections was a communion of saints. What was it that made the change ? It was a sense of a Divine call that had come to men.'

Throughout the centuries this has been a constant feature of Christian experience. Men may have arrived at the Kingdom by many and various routes but always they have recognized the same invitation that drew them. Times, temperaments and tastes have determined the manner of their coming but it was the same constraint that was laid on them, the same hand holding them in Divine arrest. It may not have appeared in this light at once but whenever they have reflected on their experience they have acknowledged a Divine love, beyond their desire and deserving, with the irresistible compulsion of the Cross, isolating and claiming them. Chosen !

How can we be faint-hearted who know we have thus been called ? This is our anchor sure and steadfast. The world will try to taunt and torment us but it cannot move us who have this assurance and hope in our hearts. ' Sometimes,' said one of General Booth's converts, ' the devil tempts me to think that I'm no different now that I am Christ's ; but I have written down the date and hour of my conversion on a postcard and every time he leans over my shoulder and whispers in my ear I pull it out and he's away hot haste.' It is our defence from the hostility of men and the treachery of our own hearts. We are chosen men.

As a chosen race, says Peter, we are invested with authority. *We are a royal priesthood.* We are not giving voice to mere opinions. We have not juggled with pros and cons and given a tentative verdict. We are sure.

' I came across a bedraggled creature preaching at the cross-roads,' wrote a man, ' but I soon forgot the sight of the man in the sound of his voice. He spoke with a certainty that shook me.' For this authentic, assured note is an evidence that we belong to the chosen race. The gospel is not a good idea that we have wrought out of our own thinking and which we are offering to the world. It is God's idea. We have heard it from the King and we speak with an authority, not our own but His.

For this note of authority people to-day are listening with strained ears. They have grown weary with our vague philosophizing. They want to be sure. Wherever a church is presenting its message with this accent of assurance, see how they are crowding into it. Or look how they throng the evangelist whose ministry has sensational results. ' Come ! ' they cry. ' This is the real thing.'

This is an uncertain world in which we are living. Our statesmen are playing with the highest stakes with which men have ever gambled. Where are

they heading us? Contending systems of society are struggling for the mastery and we, the common people, stand helplessly watching and waiting with bated breath. The security of ancient traditions and habits of living has been wrenched from us. With what does the future lie? These are the thoughts that create their ferment in our souls. And it is to this very condition that the gospel of Jesus Christ speaks. If we have heard God's call through the life and words, through the death and resurrection of His Son; if we have been stirred by the ministry of His Spirit and know His power unto salvation, we are bound to speak. And since we know the darkness out of which we have been called, it is authentic, authoritative news we have to give the world. No apologies! No reservations!

As a chosen race, Peter adds, we are a *consecrated people, God's own possession*. (For that is what his words really mean—God's own property.) Any hesitation in proclaiming this saving word springs from forgetfulness of who we are. Are we afraid of arrogance, of assuming superior airs in the eyes of the world? Indeed that is a lively temptation. Some seek to commend Christ who posture and pose and with lofty gestures present the gospel as a boon that they are conferring. But such a manner is impossible for those who remember that they are God's possession, all unworthily sought out and called. Are we hindered by our acute consciousness of our own inconsistencies and failures? We all might well be stricken dumb by this glaring fact. Yet it is this that is the ground of our glory. We can never cease to be amazed that God has claimed us, and if us, then we have boldness in offering His gospel to anybody. Are we silent because of the danger in which we might be involved or the responsibilities to which we might be committed? Shame on us. Since we know ourselves to be God's own private possession, no danger can affright us and no responsibility can overwhelm us.

Never forget, Peter reminds us, that the end for which we have been called, equipped, and preserved is the *showing forth of God's praises*. We are under an obligation to let the world see the excellencies of our God. If the gospel is a living reality to us, then we are forgiven men, redeemed, bought and won from sin and death and the power of the devil. We have been caught up from the world of destruction and doom and borne into Christ's everlasting Kingdom. However shy and reticent we may naturally be we have something to show to mankind. 'If Christianity had not merely out-thought the ancient world but out-lived it as well, it would never have survived,' it has been said. It out-lives yet the most refined pagan cultures. Then, come, friends, Let us show them!

Religious Education

The Minister and the Teacher

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., B.D., Lecturer in Religious Education, Cheshire County Training College, Alsager

There is a growing realization of the importance of religious teaching in schools. Up and down the country teachers are turning to this subject with a new interest—and with a new sense of their own inability to do justice to it.

There are several reasons for this. The wording of the Butler Education Act encourages it. The White Paper which heralded the Act said, 'There has been a very general wish, not confined to representatives of the churches, that religious education should be given a more defined place in the life and work of the schools.' That has been done.

Two other factors are involved. The Agreed Syllabuses demanded by the Act in England and Wales, like those prepared by the Joint Committee in Scotland, have done a great deal to make it easier for the non-specialist teacher of Scripture to be effective in what must necessarily be for some a difficult task. At the same time, there has been a most welcome addition to the volume of literature produced by experts to help the teacher of religion in schools. Foremost in this have been the specialist publishing houses, Religious Education Press and the Student Christian Movement Press, but the 'secular' publishers have not been slow to see the extent of the field.

Now all this, I suggest, lays a very serious obligation upon the ordinary minister. In his congregation he is almost bound to have some teachers. If he is wise, he will come to regard these teachers as his most important evangelical colleagues. Ready to his hand, he has people who are in daily and vital touch with every child in the land. Through teachers, and through them alone, can the Church reach the whole of a generation, since every child must by statute attend school.

In the light of some experience of the work of the ministry, of teaching in schools, and now of

teacher-training, I venture to offer some suggestions as to the ways in which the minister may be of great service to the teachers with whom he may be in contact.

First, he will encourage such teachers as are convinced Christians to offer to undertake a substantial proportion of the religious teaching in the schools in which they serve. Many head teachers are only too glad if members of their staffs volunteer for this work; and it is obviously desirable that such teaching should be taken tactfully out of the hands of those who cannot do it with sincerity, and who are generally only too willing to be relieved of the embarrassing responsibility. There is much to be said in favour of the arrangement by which the class-teacher or form-master should teach Scripture, since the children realize then that religion is not merely a bee in a specialist's bonnet but is the underlying reality of the whole life of the man or woman whose influence they are most likely to feel. But where a teacher cannot conscientiously teach Scripture it is a thousand times better that another should undertake the subject.

Secondly, the minister may be able to help teachers by discussing with them the fundamentals of Old Testament and New Testament study. In some larger churches it may even be desirable that a regular meeting of teachers be arranged, where a course of corporate study may be followed under the guidance of the minister, perhaps with the assistance of some of his ministerial neighbours.

In towns and cities, the logical outcome of this may well be the creation of a study group of Christian teachers which will meet regularly. The ministers of the town would not only foster this, but would supply the lecturers or suggest experts who could be invited to conduct such a course. Where the L.E.A. does not run such a course in religious education, and where the ever-growing organization of the Institute of Christian Education has not yet found it possible to establish a group, the churches could, by pooling the resources of their ministerial man-power, provide a very helpful alternative.

If such a course is arranged without being bound too closely by denominational allegiances, it will probably attract some of the many teachers who are prepared to teach Scripture but who have no particular church loyalty. There are far more such teachers than we imagine. Not infrequently they have met in College the insistent influence of the Student Christian Movement or have experienced the reality of worship for the first time in College services, but have never come into definite membership of any church. The opportunities of such study groups therefore are not confined to church-member teachers, nor is the influence of them likely to be limited to the school. It may well be felt in the churches by the enlarging of the fellowship.

The third way in which the minister can help the teacher is by his knowledge of books. The teacher needs short readable Introductions of proved scholarship, from which he can find quickly and accurately the fundamentals of criticism (like A. M. Hunter's *Introducing the New Testament* [S.C.M.], and the two excellent Introductions to Old Testament and New Testament prepared especially for schools by T. H. Robinson and W. G. Robinson respectively [Nisbet]). He needs access to articles or brief treatments of difficult themes like miracle and Hebrew customs. He needs adequate—but not detailed—histories of the development of religion in the Old Testament and the expansion of Christianity.

He needs books also of a more technical nature which will help him in the actual presentation of his material in school, and which will suggest activity and expression for the children to undertake. The excellent *Teachers' Guides to Religious Education* (R.E.P.) are well known, though not so well as they should be, and there are many other books of teaching material of varying worth. The great lack which the average non-specialist teacher experiences is in books on teaching method. He may find a score of well-known books to show him how to teach his mathematics in an arresting and novel way. But as yet there are few books which have explored the many avenues through which the child's religious susceptibility can be reached. Margaret Avery's recent *Teaching Scripture* is excellent (R.E.P.), and C. M. Jones' *The Methods of Christian Education* (S.C.M.) is very helpful. W. H. Whanslaw's series of practical books on Bible Models, Drawing and Puppetry (R.E.P.) is typical of an effective approach, whilst A. J. Watts' *No New Thing* (S.P.C.K.) treats a method of visual presentation which the Anglican Church is using with increasing effect in church and school. R. L. Arundale's *Project Work in Religious Education* (R.E.P.) sincerely attempts to use this widely accepted secondary modern method for specifically religious purposes, but more thorough-going experiment is needed on this line. There are ministers who, realizing the supreme importance of the best possible presentation of Christian teaching in schools, try to keep abreast of the developments in this type of literature and call the attention of teachers to them.

I have left until last the mention of the way in which the minister can most help the cause of Christian education. It is by looking out and encouraging the right type of candidate for the teaching profession (for Christian education is not merely teaching Christian truths: it is teaching by Christians). Let him show a man how he can

unconsciously witness for his Lord whilst he is teaching history or mathematics or science or art.

Never was there so great a need for teaching to be part of the Church's ministry. Never was there so great a thrill as that of sharing in school a lad's secret progress into the realm of God. Whose thrill is it—minister's or teacher's? I answer, both. We share this task of bringing the good news to the children of our sub-Christian generation, and we neglect that task at our peril.

Contributions and Comments

1 John iii. 4 f.

The purpose of this note is to consider whether the meaning of this passage may not be elucidated by a comparison with the Septuagint version of Is 53.

The statement in *v.* 4 of our passage: 'Everyone who does sin (*τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*) does also lawlessness (*τὴν ἀνομίαν*), and sin is lawlessness,' if regarded as a general definition of sin, must, as Dr. C. H. Dodd remarks in the Moffatt Commentary, 'be considered somewhat superficial.' It is generally agreed amongst commentators (including Dr. Dodd) that the writer's purpose was not so much to define sin as to refute the tendency of some Gnostics to hold that their 'superior' *γνῶσις* entitled them to sit loose to the ordinary requirements of the moral law.

Whilst, however, this was the writer's practical purpose, was not his terminology in this passage suggested by the virtual identification of *ἁμαρτία* and *ἀνομία* in the Septuagint, especially in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and by the Christian practice, for which evidence exists (as we shall show), of substituting *ἁμαρτία* for *ἀνομία* in quoting Is 53^{9b}?

1 Jn 3^{5} seems to contain a distinct echo of Is 53. 'And ye know that he was manifested in order that he might take away [or 'bear'] sins, and in him is no sin (*ἁμαρτία*).' Compare in Is 53 (LXX): 'he bears our sins' (*ἁμαρτίας*, *v.* 4); 'he did no lawlessness' (*ἀνομίαν*, *v.* 9^{b}); 'He was wounded on account of our sins (*ἁμαρτίας*) and has been bruised on account of our lawlessnesses' (*ἀνομίας*, *v.* 5); 'and he will bear their sins' (*ἁμαρτίας*, *v.* 11); 'and he bore the sins (*ἁμαρτίας*) of many, and was delivered up on account of their lawlessnesses' (*ἀνομίας*, *v.* 12).

In addition to the striking parallelism between *ἁμαρτία* and *ἀνομία* in Is 53, which amounts to a virtual identification of the terms, we note the similarity of ideas with those in 1 Jn 3^{5}. Especially significant is a comparison of *ἁμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* (1 Jn 3^{5}) with *ἀνομίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν* (Is 53^{9}). The latter is quoted in 1 P 2^{22} as *ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἐποίησεν*. The substitution of *ἁμαρτία* for *ἀνομία* is important, for it implies the equation of the terms. As Dr. E. G. Selwyn observes in his commentary at 1 P 2^{22}: 'If Windisch is right in regarding 1 P $2^{21\text{-}25}$ as part of a hymn about Christ, the modification may well have been due to the hymnodist.' But, whether in a Christian hymn or in a 'proof-text,' the substitution of *ἁμαρτία* for *ἀνομία* would probably be widely known in the Early Church. If need were felt to justify the substitution, the justification might well take the form of the statement in 1 Jn 3^{4}. This treatment of *ἁμαρτία* and *ἀνομία* as virtually synonymous is warranted by the parallelism between the words in Is 53, and by their close association elsewhere in the LXX (*e.g.* Ex 34^{9}: *ἀφελεῖς σὺ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν καὶ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν*).

Does not this interpretation of our passage against the background of the Septuagint version of Is 53 receive additional confirmation from the occurrence at 1 Jn 3^{9} of the word *σπέρμα* (without the article)? 'Everyone who has been born from God does not do sin, because *σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει*.' The word *σπέρμα* (without the article) occurs also at Is 53^{10} (LXX), where it means 'seed' in the sense of 'offspring.'

Now the meaning of the word *σπέρμα* at 1 Jn 3^{9} is a subject of dispute amongst exegetes. Dr. C. H. Dodd understands it to mean 'seed' in a sense somewhat similar to that in which Hellenistic writers spoke of 'the seed of the Divine' immanent in the soul of man: that is, not in the sense of 'offspring,' but in that of a generative principle. He therefore translates: 'Everyone who has been born from God does not sin, because the seed of God abides in him,' *i.e.* in the Christian. This interpretation makes sense, and is supported by a wealth of learning. Nevertheless, if, as is contended in this article, there is a LXX background to this passage, it would be most natural to assign to *σπέρμα* here the same meaning that it has at Is 53^{10}, *i.e.* 'offspring.' This is the sense in which Dr. Moffatt took it, and his rendering seems preferable: 'Anyone who is born of God does not commit sin, for the offspring of God remain in Him, and they cannot sin, because they

are born of God.' This translation has the advantage of taking αὐτοῦ and ἐν αὐτῷ as both referring to God. Dr. Dodd's rendering, on the other hand, rather violently makes them refer to different persons, the first (αὐτοῦ) to God, the second (ἐν αὐτῷ) to the Christian. Moreover, Dr. Moffatt's rendering is in agreement with *v.* 6 : ' Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.'

That the background to this passage is the LXX is further suggested by the occurrence there of very similar expressions to that in 1 Jn 3^9: for example, Ps 88^{37} (89^{36}) τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα μενεῖ: Sir 44^{13} ἕως αἰῶνος μενεῖ σπέρμα αὐτῶν. Compare the converse statement in Is 14^{20} οὐ μὴ μείνῃς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον, σπέρμα πονηρόν.

That the writer of the passage which we have been considering was turning his thoughts towards the LXX is made still more probable by the fact that this is the one and only section of the Epistle where he explicitly refers to the Old Testament (*v.* 12).

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Entre Nous

A Victorious Victim

Nazism, despite its apparent interest in the future of the race, was diseugenic. The best men in the State, the most independent and responsible, were the first to be driven into exile or arrested and the least likely to survive. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was one of its victims. For a time (1933–1935) he took charge of the German congregations of St. Paul's and Sydenham in London. Thereafter, while in charge of a theological seminary of the Confessional Church in Pomerania, he wrote ' The Cost of Discipleship ' [1937]. 1939 found him on a lecture tour in the U.S.A. Despite the pleas of his friends, he took one of the last ships sailing back to Germany before the War. For four years he divided his time between Church work, tasks in connexion with the Resistance Movement, and the writing of his ' Ethics,' published posthumously and unfinished in 1949. His *Letters and Papers from Prison* are edited by his friend, Eberhard Bethge, and excellently translated by Reginald H. Fuller (S.C.M. ; 12s. 6d. net). Every page reveals a fresh and agile as well as a very devout mind. Those who expect to read the complaints of a victim will be disappointed. The calm note of an assured victory is dominant, not only in the sermons and poems, which are the results of profound reflection, but in the informal little notes. Curiously moving are the homely touches—thanks to Karl Barth for the gift of a good cigar, thoughts on the uses of mothers-in-law, good wishes for a baby's christening. There is no attempt to work out many of the ideas hinted at. There was little chance for that. But few will fail to find here some seed thoughts.

One conception to which he returns again and again is that the world has come of age, and he seems to suggest that a new relationship between the world and God has, therefore, been necessitated. By coming of age, he means the process begun about the thirteenth century towards the autonomy of man—' the discovery of the laws by which the world lives and manages in science, social and political affairs, art, ethics, and religion.' This process, he suggests, has in our time reached a certain completion. Man has learned to cope with all questions of importance without recourse to God as a working hypothesis. That this cannot mean what it appears to mean at first sight, is obvious, if one remembers who wrote it, and where, and when. What he is protesting against is that ' God ' whose sole range of interest is in the questions not yet solved by man—death and guilt. What he pleads for is a radical theology replacing the ' God ' of ' religion ' with the ' Lord God ' of all life. All other ground he would remove from beneath man's feet—even that of religion—save God alone.

Speaking of ' the perfection and poise ' of his parents' life, finding full scope in professional and private activities, he speaks of being painfully aware of the fragmentariness of his own. Tantalized by glimpses of new thought on every page, one can but share in the pain of that awareness and rejoice in the conviction with which he concludes — ' This very fragmentariness points towards a fulfilment beyond the limits of human achievement.'

And yet even that fulfilment must not be self-fulfilment. ' One must abandon every attempt to make something of oneself,—whether it be a saint, a converted sinner, a churchman. . . . This is what I mean by worldliness—taking life in one's stride, with all its duties and problems, its successes and failures, its experiences and helplessness.

It is in such a life that we throw ourselves utterly in the arms of God and participate in His sufferings in the world and watch with Christ in Gethsemane. That is faith. . . .

'I think you get my meaning, though I put it so briefly. I am glad I have been able to learn it, and I know I could only have done so along the road I have travelled. So I am grateful and content with the past and the present. . . . May God in His mercy lead us through these times. But above all may He lead us to Himself. . . .

'Good-bye. Take care of yourself and don't lose hope—we shall all meet again soon.'

'The Venlo Incident,' a book by Payne Best, an English Officer, tells something of Bonhoeffer's last weeks, spent with prisoners drawn from all over Europe. The following extract from it is reprinted in the Foreword to *Letters and Papers from Prison*. 'Bonhoeffer . . . was all humility and sweetness, he always seemed to me to diffuse an atmosphere of happiness, of joy in every smallest event in life, and of deep gratitude for the mere fact that he was alive. . . . He was one of the very few men that I have ever met to whom his God was real and close to him.' And again, 'The following day, Sunday, 8th April, 1945, Pastor Bonhoeffer held a little service and spoke to us in a manner which reached the hearts of all, finding just the right words to express the spirit of our imprisonment and the thoughts and resolutions which it had brought. He had hardly finished his last prayer when the door opened and two evil-looking men in civilian clothes came in and said: "Prisoner Bonhoeffer, get ready to come with us." Those words "come with us"—for all prisoners they had come to mean one thing only—the scaffold.

'We bade him good-bye—he drew me aside—"This is the end," he said. "For me the beginning of life," and then he gave me a message to give, if I could, to the Bishop of Chichester. . . . Next day, at Flossenburg, he was hanged.'

JOHN R. GRAY

Coverdale

In *Coverdale and His Bibles* (Lutterworth Press; 27s. 6d.) Dr. J. F. Mozley has contrived to produce a volume which is, at one and the same time, a first-rate achievement of technical scholarship and independent research, and a book of immense popular interest. If for no other reason, the book is of absorbing interest because it tells the story of the struggle to make the English Bible available to the English people. Coverdale himself emerges as the most attractive of spirits. He was always gentle. 'The Spirit of God . . . is in some a vehement wind,' wrote Bale of Coverdale, 'but in him it is a still small voice, comforting wavering hearts.' He was a modest and a humble man, who knew his technical and linguistic deficiencies, yet he was also a real scholar. 'Nothing in this world,' he wrote to Thomas Cromwell, 'I desire but books as concerning my learning.' When he was Bishop of Exeter, John Hooker wrote of him, 'He was, after the rate of his livings, a great keeper of hospitality, very sober in diet, godly in life, friendly to the godly, liberal to the poor, and courteous to all men, void of pride, full of humility, abhorring covetousness, and an enemy to all wickedness and wicked men, whose companies he shunned.'

Coverdale became a translator not from choice but from an inner compulsion laid upon him. 'Considering how excellent knowledge and learning an interpreter of scripture ought to have in the tongues, and pondering also mine own insufficiency therein, and how weak I am to perform the office of a translator, I was the more loth to meddle with this work.' He was not without a touch of that humorous resignation with which any writer must face his critics, for, in the Preface to his 1538 English–Latin Diglot, he writes, 'The world is captious; and many there be that had rather find twenty faults than to amend one. And oft times the more labour a man taketh for their commodity, the less thank he hath.' This book tells the fascinating story of Coverdale's own Bible, of the Matthew Bible, which was really the work of John Rogers, of the Coverdale Diglots, and of the Great Bible. Always the original documents are consulted and carefully cited, and, on occasion, documents not hitherto used, are set out. There is a series of nine interesting appendices on special subjects. It is interesting to note that it is to Coverdale we owe two of our best loved New Testament translations—Jn 3^{16} and 1 Co 15^{54}. No one who is interested in the history of the English Bible should fail to read this book.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

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PUBLISHERS—T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH, 2. *Annual Subscription, including postage, 19s. 6d. net.*
AGENTS—WILLIAM DAWSON & SONS LTD., LONDON, E.C.4. CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, NEW YORK, U.S.A.
ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT—KING'S GATE, ABERDEEN. *Rates—£10, 10s. per page; smaller spaces pro rata. 'Copy' to be received not later than the 6th of the previous month.*